

B. Robinson, the printer

THE
CHRISTIANS
CABALA,

OR,
SURE TRADITION:

Necessary to be

KNOWN and BELIEVED,
By all that will be SAVED.

A Doctrine holding forth, Good
Tidings of Great Joy, to the greatest
of PENITENT SINNERS.

With a CHARACTER of one that is
truly Such.

As it was lately held forth to the
CHURCH of GOD, at Great
YARMOUTH.

By *John Brinsley*, Minister of the
Gospel there.

LONDON, Printed for *George Sawbridge*, at
the Sign of the Bible on *Ludgate-Hill*, 1662.

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To all that Love
The Lord JESUS CHRIST
in Sinceritie,
Within the Town of
GREAT YARMOUTH;
Grace and Peace.

(Much esteemed in the Lord)

I is now Thirty seven
years, since I was by a
Divine Providence,
sent to exercise my
Ministeriall Function
among you; my first
entrance within your Walls, being
upon the same day that your late
Dread Sovereign *KING CHARLES*
the First, was there with great Solem-
nitie, and with the Universal Accla-
mation and Joy of all that were pre-
sent, Proclaimed. And of this my

To the Reader.

entrance, I hope I may without boasting say unto you, what *Paul* doth of his, unto his *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thef.* 2. 1. that *it hath not been* altogether *in vain*. It having been my desire to follow his steps, in making what improvement I might of such liberty and opportunity as the same providence hath been pleased to put into my hand, in speaking to you *the Gospel of God*. And that these my poor labours might be the more effectual, not dying in the care, not perishing in the hearing, I have adventured to expose some of them to a publick view; that so, by this *Sacrifice* offered up unto God and his Church, being *dead*, *I might yet speak*, and preach being silent. And upon the same account it is that I do now send these *Meditations* after them: Wherein you shall meet with a *Subject*, which (if you will believe your Apostle) is *worthy of all acceptation*. Such I am sure is the matter here held forth; what ever the manner of handling it be; it containing in it, the sum and
sub.

To the Reader.

substance of the *Gospel*, which being brought home, as here it is by this *chosen Vessel*, by a particular Application, it cannot but bring abundant Consolation to the Soul of every truly *penitent sinner*: Such experience had this our *Apostle* of it; and so have many others after him. Among whom I meet with a memorable instance in that renowned Martyr of Christ, Mr. *Thomas Bilney*, who in a Letter of his to *Cutbert Tonsall* Bishop of *London*, (as Mr. *Fox* in his *Martyrology* hath Related it) giveth this account of the manner and means of his own Conversion. *Hearing* (saith he) *of the New Testament, which was first set forth by Erasmus, and understanding it to be eloquently done by him, being allured rather for the Latin, then for the word of God, (for at that time, I knew not what it meant) I bought it even by the good providence of God, as I do now well understand and perceive. And at the first reading (as I remember) I chanced upon this Sentence, (O most sweet and com-*

To the Reader.

fortable Sentence to my Soul) the first Epistle to Timothy the first Chapter, It is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief.

This one sentence through God's instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, and being almost in despaire, that immediately I felt a marvellous comfort and quietness, insomuch, that my bruised bones leaped for joy.

Thus have you a *Probatum est* affixed to this *Receipt*, which being taken in, and rightly digested, I doubt not but it will be found a *Sovereign Cordial* to whoever it is that shall make use of it. Onely take heed that your Souls be duly prepared for it, by a true sight and sense of sin, that so you may see and feel, the need you have of *Jesus Christ*, and be excited willingly to receive him, not only as a *Saviour*, but also as a *Sovereign*;
to

To the Reader.

to be Ruled and governed, as well as Saved by him. Being thus disposed, now let me invite you to come, and *suck this Breast of Consolation*, which you have here held forth unto you, receiving and lodging this Divine truth in your hearts, *remembering it, meditating of it, believing it, applying it* to your selves, and *practising* what you are here directed and excited to; which whilest you do, let my prayers go along with my poor endeavours, that through the concurrence of grace, they may be made effectual unto you, and who ever else shall make use of them, for that end for which they have been designed. In the assured hope whereof I rest,

TARMOUTH,

March 30.

1662.

*Your Servant in
the Work of
the Lord,*

JOHN BRINSLEY.



READER,

THere is lately Printed a Learned, Pious, and Practical Commentary upon the whole Gospel of *St. Mark*; wherein the Text is Logically Analyfed; The meaning of the Holy Spirit, clearly and foundly Opened; Doctrins naturally Raifed; All seeming differences between this and the other Evangelifts Reconciled; And many important Cafes of Confcience Refolved, By *Mr. George Petter*. Published at the defire of above 200. Learned Divines, Signified under their Hands.

Alfo, An Exposition of the whole Epiftle to the *Hebrews*, wherein the Text is cleared, *Theopolitica* improved, The *Socinian* Comment Examined, By *Mr. George Lawfon*, Rector of *More*, in the County of *Salop*.

Alfo, The Running of the *Chriftian Race* with *Patience*, By *Mr. John Brinsley*.

Prayer, and *Praise*. A twofold Tribute to be paid by all Loyal Subjects, to their Supream and Subordinate Sovereign. By *Mr. John Brinsley*.

The *Rich Fool*, Being an Exposition of that Parable, *Luke 12: 16. 22*. By *Nehemiah Rogers*, Minister of the Gospel of *Chrift*.

A *Posing Question*, Put by the wife Man, viz. *SOLOMON*, to the wifeft of Men, concerning making a Judgment of Temporal Conditions. By *Benjamin Baxter*, late Minister of the Gospel in *Worcefter*.

All to be fold, by *George Sawbridge*, at the
Signe of the Bible on *Ludgate-Hill*.

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THE
CHRISTIANS CABALA;
OR,
SURE TRADITION,

Necessary to be
KNOWN, & BELIEVED,
by all that will be SAVED.

1 Tim. 1. 15.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.



His Portion of Scripture, (as I remember, and so I presume do some, if not many of you) about twenty years since, I took up, and spent some time upon in this place. I now reassume and take it up again; which I am induced to do, not so much by the *Season*, as by the *Subject*; that being such, as cannot be too much, or too often spoken of, *A word never out of season*, containing in it, that Ευαγγέλιον χαράς μεγάλης, spoken of by the *Angel*, Luke 2. 10. that joyful News, good tidings of great joy to
all

Decem-
ber 29.
1661.

all people, even to the greatest of penitent sinners. So this chosen Vessel, the blessed Apostle, the great Doctor of the Gentiles looked upon it, who here mindeth his Timothy, and all others to whom this his Epistle should come, of a saying, a Doctrine, which, as it was sweet and comfortable to himself, so it would be to all them, who should make the like use of it that he had done. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*

Parts of
the Text
Doctrine.
Applica-
tion.

In which words (not to spend time about connexion, and dependence upon what went before) we shall take notice of two things; The Doctrine, and the Application.

The Doctrine, which is first commended, then Propounded. Commended by way of Preface; and that, first from the Veritie, then from the Dignitie of it. From the Veritie; [*This is a faithful saying*]; from the Dignitie, [*and worthy of all acceptation*], Propounded, [*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*]. The Application followeth, wherein the Apostle bringeth home this General to himself in Particular, ranking himself in the list and number of these sinners which we had spoken of, yea, in the forefront of them, [*of whom I am chief*]. Let these be the parts of the Text, upon which I shall (through Divine assistance) insist severally; yet more briefly upon the former, that I may enlarge upon the lat-

latter, the *Applicatory* part, which in this review, my eye is chiefly upon.

Begin we with the *Doctrin*e, & therein with the *commendation* of it; which is the very same with that which we find *affixed* to that other *Doctrin*e, Chap. 4. v. 9. of this Epistle, where the Apostle, holding forth the great advantage that cometh unto Christians from true Piety and Godliness; *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*; he subjoynes, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation*. And so here he maketh use of the same *commendation*, only in a different order, *prefixing* it by way of *Preface* or *Introduction*. Not unlike a *Trumpet*, sounded before the publishing of a *Royal Proclamation*, which serveth to make way for it, to call people to the hearing of it, and to command attention to it. Of such use is this *Elogium*, this high commendation which the Apostle here giveth of this *Doctrin*e, which he intended to propound, serving to excite all to give the more earnest attendance to it. Which use, *Calvin* (writing upon it) willet h
all to make of it.

And not without cause, doth this our Apostle thus usher in this *Doctrin*e, and make way for it; it being a *Mystery* which will not easily pierce, and readily sink into the heads and hearts of men, to be so received as it ought to be. *The natural man* (as he tells

The Doctrin
Com-
mended

*Prefatio
hac nobis
fit instar
Buccinae
sonantis
ad publi-
candum
gratia
Christi
praconi-
um. Calv.
Com. in
Text.*

tells his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 2. 15) *ὁ ἄνθρωπος* receiveth not the things which are of God. Spiritual mysteries he receiveth them not into his understanding rightly to apprehend, or conceive of them; nor into his judgement throughly to be convinced of the truth of them; so as firmly to believe them; much less into his heart, his will and affections, to close with them, to imbrace them. Such is the *Doctrine* here propounded and published, even that great mystery of Godliness, (as the same Pen styleth it, 1 Tim. 3. 16.) The *Doctrine* of Salvation by Christ. A *Doctrine*, though worthy of all, yet finding little credence and acceptation in the world. And therefore the Apostle, to prepare the hearts of men for the receiving of it, sets this high commendation upon it, commending it, first from the *Veritie*, then from the *Dignitie* of it. Touch upon each.

1. From
the Veri-
tie of it.

1. For the *Veritie* of it. [*This is a faithful saying*] ΠΙΣΤΕΣ ὁ λόγος, sermo fidelis, i. e. verus, a true saying. So we have it rendred, Cap. 3. v. 1. of this Epistle. And so our former Translation readeth it here, *This is a true saying*. Sermo certus, (as Beza hath it); *A sure and certain Saying*. Such are not all the sayings of men, not of the wisest, no nor yet of the best of them. What the Psalmist said in his haste, in his passion, Psal. 116. 11. *I said in my haste, All men are lyars*; The Apostle speaketh it advisedly, Rom. 3. 4. Let
God

God be true, and every man a liar. Such are men, lyars all, Passively and Actively. Being subject to be deceived themselves, they are subject to deceive others. Their words, their sayings, are not alwayes Πιστοὶ λόγοι, true and certain. But such are all the sayings, all the words which we meet withal in the Word, the Scripture. The Scripture being (as Saint James calleth it, Jam. 1. 18.) λόγος ἀληθείας The word of Truth. There is not a saying there but is a true saying, not a word, but is a faithful word. Such are the words of the Law, and such are the words of the Gospel; such are the Threatnings, such are the Promises, such are the Prophecies, which there we meet with; all Πιστοὶ λόγοι, true words, faithful sayings. Write (saith the Spirit) for these words are faithful and true, Rev. 21. 5. And they must needs be so, being the words of that God, who is the God of Truth, (as we find him sometimes styled, Deut. 32. 4. Psal. 31. 5. Isa. 65. 16.) Truth it self. The words of that Word, the Essential Word, the Eternal Son of God, who is, (as he is called, Rev. 1. 5.) ὁ μάρτυς ὁ μαρτυρῶν, That faithful Witness. Such is he, and such are his words, all faithful words.

Among all, none deserving this Encomium, The Doctrine of the Gospel, the sum whereof we have comprised in these few words in the Text, Jesus Christ came into the world

world to save sinners. Which is, ἀξίωμα *i. e.* ἀξίωμα, a faithful saying, worthy to be credited, to be believed. So it was by the *Fathers* under the *Old Testament*, who beheld it only a far off in the Promise: though they dyed before they received it, yet they believed it, living in the faith of it, and dying in the faith of it. *These all dyed in the faith, not having received the promise*, saith the Apostle, *Heb. 11. 13.* speaking of the *Patriarchs*, who died in the faith, as firmly believing that Promise concerning the *Land of Canaan*, which God had made to them; so that great promise concerning the *Messia*, who was to come into the world: whose day *Abraham* is said to have seen, (as our Saviour tells the Jews) *Job. 8. 56.* In this faith they lived, and in this faith they dyed. So fully were they assured of the truth thereof, that they were not afraid to take their death upon it, to dye in the faith of it. So certain was this saying to them, who beheld it only in the promise. Whereupon it was, that the Prophet *Isay* speaking of this, of *Christs* coming into the world, he speaks of it, as a thing already done: *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given*, *Isa. 9. 6.* How much more certain then may it be unto us, who look upon it in the performance, not as a thing to be done, but done. What was promised to them, is made good to us; what they looked and waited for, we have received.

So

So as the Apostle might well say, what here he doth, *This is a faithful saying, &c.*

But I shall not spend time in confirmation of this truth, which among Christians were but a needless labour. Never was truth (excepting only that of a *deitie*, that there is a *God*, which is attested by every creature) compassed about with such a *νῆος μαρτύρων* such a *cloud of witnesses* as this. To this truth, gave all the *Prophets* witness; so Peter tells *Cornelius* and his company, *Acts* 10. 43. And to this truth gave all the *Apostles* witness. The one testifying that it should be done, the other that it was done. To this truth gave all those *Types* under the Law witness, being all *Shadows* of this *Substance*. To this truth have all the *Saints* of God in all ages of the world given witness. All that ever were, before the Law, under the Law, under the Gospel: Some, and many of them, sealing it with their blood; all of them, pawning and adventuring their souls, their everlasting happiness upon it. Now if *two or three witnesses* be sufficient to establish a word, (which with men ordinarily they are, as that Text tells us, *Mat.* 18. 16.) how much more such a *cloud of witnesses*? Never was truth more confirmed then this truth, *The Doctrine of Salvation by Christ*, that *Jesus Christ* came into the world to save sinners. *This is a faithful saying.*

2. And, as faithful, so acceptable; that is

From
the Dig-
nity of it

the second branch of the *Commendation*. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance*. So it cannot be said of all truths. Sometimes (as *Aquinas* notes upon it) a saying may be true, and yet a hard saying. Verus sed durus, *This is a hard saying*, (say the *Disciples* to their Lord and Master, discoursing to them concerning the *Bread of Life*, which he said was Himself) *Joh. 6. 60*. A true saying. This they would not, durst not, make any question of, receiving it from his mouth. But a hard saying, σκληρὸς λόγος, harsh and irksome to be heard, *Who can hear it?* So it was to them, because they could not receive it, were not able rightly to apprehend and understand it; the *hardness* being (as *Calvin* well notes upon it) in their hearts, not in the *Doctrine* delivered. Thus Sayings may be, and often are, true, but not grateful; such are Reprehensions for the most part, being like wine poured into a green wound, which though proper and useful, yet it is searching and smarting: Though they carry never so much truth in them, yet they are seldome pleasing, seldome welcome: *Paul* reprehending his *Galatians*, he told them nothing but the truth, yet that truth which was spoken to them, was requited with enmity from them. *Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?* (so he expostulates it with them) *Gal. 4. 16*. Thus it often falleth out:

Quin potius in illorum cordibus erat durities, non in sermone. *Calv. Com. in loc.*

Veri-

Veritas odium parit, *Truth breeds hatred.*
 All truths are not acceptable truths. But
 such is this Truth which our Apostle here
 holdeth forth, *That Christ Jesus is come into*
the world to save sinners. It is a Doctrine which
 hath not more Truth then Sweetness in it;
 deserving not more Credit than Acceptation.
This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all ac-
ceptation. Worthy of acceptance, and worthy
of All acceptance. So I shall divide the
 words.

1. *Worthy of Acceptation.* ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιός 1.
 An acceptable word, *worthy to be received,* (as The Do-
 the former Translation renders it). And not *ctrine of*
 only *received* but *approved,* which (as a *Lapide* the Gos-
 notes) the word ἀποδοχῆς importes. pel wor-
 thy of

And well may it be said so to be, it being *Accepta-*
 a good word, a good saying, containing in it, tion.
 good matter. *My heart is inditing a good mat-* Græcum
ter, (saith the Psalmist, speaking of the King- ἀποδοχῆς
 ly Office of Christ, Psal. 45. 1.) *I speak of* significat
the things which I have made, touching the non tan-
 King, (as it there followeth). Such is the rum ac-
 Doctrine of Salvation by Jesus Christ. It ceptionem
 is a good word, containing good matter, tionem,
 εὐαγγέλιον, Gospel, that is, a good Spell, a good sed &
 speech, (which is conceived to be the Notati- approbati-
 onem,
 tion of the English word Gospel). A good Corn a
 Saying, containing good tidings. It is that Lapide
 which David saith of Abimaaz, 2 Sam. 18. 27. in Text.
He is a good man, and he cometh with good ti-
dings. Much more truly, may it be said of

Jesus Christ, and his coming into the world. Being himself *Good*, he came with *good Tidings*, tidings of Salvation. And what tidings like unto these tidings? Good tidings of joy, of great joy! So the *Angell* telleth the *Skepheard*s at the Birth of this our Saviour, *Luke 2. 10. Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.* Tidings of Salvation, cannot but be tidings of Joy. Such are the tidings of temporal Salvation. They are good tidings. No words more sweet, more comfortable to nature than they. The Prophet *Zachary*, speaking of the promises of deliverance which God made to *Jerusalem* at the prayers of the Angel from their present sufferings, *Zach. 1. 13. The Lord* (saith he) *answered the Angel that talked with me with good words, and comfortable words.* How much more then the word of *Eternal Salvation*. And this is the word, the Saying, here held forth in the Text, *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, to be unto them, the *Author of Eternal Salvation*, (as that Text hath it, *Heb. 5. 9.*) And how good is this saying? Well may it then be said (what here it is) to be, ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιον, *worthy of acceptance*.

2.
Worthy
of All Ac-
ception

1.
To be re-
ceived by
all Men.

2. Yea of *All acceptance*, πάντων ἀποδοχῆς *a General, an Universal, Acceptation*, to be accepted by *all men*, and by *all means*; both, implied in this Expression.

1. Worthy to be accepted by *all men*. So it

it is, there being none but hath need of a Saviour, all being by nature lost creatures, (as the *Father* saith of his *Prodigal Son*, *This my Son was lost*, Luke 15. 24.) and, without a Saviour, a Redeemer, for ever lost. The news of a *Saviour*, such a Saviour, cannot but deserve a welcome entertainment from them. *Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people*, (saith the Angel there) Luke 2. 10. *πάντι τῷ λαῷ*, To all sorts of people, of what Nation, or Condition soever; whether Jews or Gentiles, Bond or Free, Rich or Poor, Prince or Peasant. And to all of these sorts. There being not any one but cometh within this list of *sinners*, being so by nature, and by practise, and so justly obnoxious to the wrath of God, from which, they are no ways able to free themselves, they stand in need of a *Saviour*; well then might the Apostle here say of this saying, *This Doctrine of Christs coming into the world to save sinners*, that it is *worthy of all acceptation*, to be accepted by *all men*.

2. And as by *all men*, so by *all means*. So the former Translation here renders it, *This* By all is a true saying, and by *all meanes* worthy to be received. And so *Estius* well explains it, *Dignum quod modis omnibus amplectemur*, worthy by all wayes and means, to be received and imbraced. Many wayes there are, whereby a saying may be received. It may be received into the *Ear*, it may be received in-

2.
By all
means.
Estius
Com. in
Text.

to the *Head*, it may be received into the *Heart*. Into the *Ear* when men *hear* what is said ; into the *Head*, when they *apprehend*, understand, and believe, what they hear. Into the *Heart*, when they are *affected* with it. And all these wayes is this Saying, this Doctrinē, worthy of Acceptation.

Into
the Ear,
worthy
to be
heard-

1. Worthy to be received into the *Ear*, by hearing of it, hearkning and attending to it. No Doctrinē, so worth the hearing as this Doctrinē, the Doctrinē of the Gospel, the Doctrinē of Salvation by Christ. No other Doctrinē can make the hearers happy ; this can do it. *Blessed are your ears for they hear*, (saith our Saviour to his Disciples) *Mat. 13. 16.* And what was it that they did hear ? why that which their forefathers desired to hear, but could not. *Many Prophets and Righteous men, have desired to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them, Verse 17.* And what was that ? why, even this saying here in the Text, *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*. This the *Fathers* before Christ, who waited for his coming, would gladly have heard ; but they heard it not. They indeed heard of his Coming, that he should come ; and believing it, they were made happy by it. But the *Disciples*, who saw Christ in the flesh, they heard and saw that he was come. And believing what they saw and heard, this made their eyes and ears, blessed and happy. No Doctrinē, no Tidings, (as I said) can make the

the hearer happy but only this. And this can do it, viz. when, being let in by the Ear, it is conveyed to the Heart. Hereby the Spirit cometh to convey it self into the Soul, by the hearing of this Doctrine. *This onely would I know*, (saith Paul to his Galatians); Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith? Gal. 3. 2. ἐξ ᾠκῆς ἰστέως by the hearing of faith, that is, the Doctrine of Faith the Gospel Preached unto you, & heard by you. The sum whereof is wrapped up in this saying, *That Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*. A saying, worthy to be received into the Ear, by hearing of it, hearkning to it.

2. And as into the Ear, so * into the Head, ^{* Into the Head} worthy to be studied, that it may be rightly ^{worthy} apprehended, and clearly understood. This ^{to be} being a great mystery, as our Apostle calleth ^{studied} it, *cap. 3. verse last of this Epistle, Great is and be- the Mytery of Godliness, God manifested in the lieved.* flesh, &c. τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, *The great My- Cabala* ^{Hebraice} *stery, the true Cabala.* Among the Jews ^{idem est} there were many *Mysteries*, Doctrines which ^{quod Ac-} they received from their Fathers by way ^{ceptio i. e.} of Tradition. These they called by that ^{accepta} Name of *Cabala*, (which imports the ^{Doctrina} same thing with this Greek word in the Text ^{et tradi-} ἀποδοχὴν) signifying *acceptio*, a receiving ^{tio tradi-} of a thing, thereby meaning their Tradition ^{ce קַבָּלָה} ^{Kibbet} ^{i. e. acce-} ^{pit, &c.} ^{Corn. a} ^{lapide in} ^{bies, Text.} ons, such Doctrines as by word of mouth ^{lapide in} were conveyed unto them from their Fore- ^{bies, Text.} fathers. And these Mysteries, these Tradition ^{bies, Text.} ons, were of high account among their ^{bies, Text.}

q. d. Ju-
dai jast-
ant suam
ἀποδο-
χ'ν, i.e.
Traditi-
onem &
Cabalam,
sed nugo-
sam et fa-
bulosam &
ego veram
et certam
ἀποδο-
χ'ν, i.e.
Traditi-
onem &
Cabalam
a Christo
ipso ac-
ceptam,
vobis tra-
do, &c. a
Lap. ibid.

bies, their Doctors, and their followers, (even as others of like kind, are at this day in the Church of Rome), these they studied and were well versed in them. But our Apostle willeth Christians to take notice, what was the true *Cabala*, the sure *Tradition*, which he here holdeth forth to them, as worthy of their study above all others; even this great *Mystery of Godliness*, That *Christ Jesus is come into the world to save sinners*. This was a mystery which the Angels beheld not without admiration, as it there followeth, *Seen of Angels*, i.e. *cum admiratione maxima*, (as Grotius rightly), with the highest admiration, as also with great satisfaction and contentment. No Mystery so worthy the looking into as this. So the *Angels* apprehended it, who are said to look into it, with an earnest desire. *Which things*, (saith Saint Peter, speaking of the Mysteries of the Gospel) *the Angels desire to look into*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. ὁμθυμῶν παραύλας, that is, *they desire to prie, and look narrowly into them*, as one that stoopeth and boweth down to look into a thing. So do they look into this Mystery, desiring still to look further into it, it being an Object, which they can never be weary of looking upon and into. No mystery so worthy to be known as this. This is *Pauls τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως*, *The excellency of the knowledg of Jesus Christ*, (as he calleth it) Phil. 3. 8. No Doctrine so worthy to be known

thankfulness. Thus did *Zacharias* entertain these glad tidings, as we find it in his Song, *Luke* 1. 68. Where Propheſying of what he ſaw to be then nigh at hand, the coming of *Chriſt*, and ſetting forth this great Myſtery of Salvation by *Chriſt*, he breaks forth into that holy and affectionate Gratulation, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, for he hath viſited and redeemed his people: and hath raiſed up a Horn of Salvation, (i.e. a Mighty Saviour) for us in the houſe of his Servant David, &c.* And with like affection we find the bleſſed *Virgin*, the Mother of our Lord, entertaining theſe tidings, *Verſe* 46. of that *Chapter*, where ſhe breaks forth into her *Magnificat*; *My Soul doth Magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour.* Such is the *Acceptation*, that this ſaying, this Doctrin here in the Text, is ſaid to be worthy of.

— Appli-
cation.

And ſuch let it find at all our hands, who this day hear of it. Let it be thus received by every of us; in and by theſe, and all other wayes and means that it is capable of. That ſhould be the *Application*, which I ſhould make of what hath hitherto been ſpoken. But this I ſhall a little longer defer, until I have ſomewhat more fully ſpoken of the Doctrin it ſelf, as it is here propounded, which we have in the next words,

Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners. A ſhort Sentence, but yielding plenty

ty of sweet and precious matter; in the whole Scripture, no one more. For the better handling of it, I shall divide it into two distinct Propositions or Conclusions, Divided into 2.

1. *Christ Jesus came into the world:* 2. *He came into the world to save sinners.* In the former we have his *Journey*, in the latter his *Errand*. Conclu- sions.

His *Journey*, *he came into the world.* His *Errand*, *shewing for what he came, and for whom he came.* Christ's Journey Errand.

For *what*, to be a *Saviour*. For *whom*, to save *sinners*. Of each of these severally, though very briefly, having had occasion, and that lately, in passing through the *Principles of the Oracles of God*, (as the Apostle calleth them, *Heb. 5. 12.*) the *Fundamentalls of Christian Religion*; to enlarge upon this Subject. Begin with the former.

Christ Jesus came into the world. For the opening and explaining of which, I might unfold unto you these 4. Particulars. Christ's Journey, touching which, 4 particulars opened. *Who* it was that came, *How* he is said to have come, *From whence* he came, and *whither* he came. But a few words of each.

Q. 1. *Who* it was that came? A. *Christ Jesus* (saith the Text). Two Names given to the world's Saviour. The former his Name of Office, *Christ*; which word (as the Hebrew *Messias* also doth) signifieth *Anointed*. So we find him often called, *the Anointed, the Anointed of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2. 35. Psal. 2. 2, &c. One *Anointed by God* Q. 1. Who it was that came.
his

his Father, (as St. Peter saith of him, *Acts* 4. 27.) being ordained and appointed by him to a threefold Office, *Sacerdotal, Prophetical, Regal*; to be a *Priest*, a *Prophet*, and a *King* to his Church; and indued with a fulness of all Graces and Abilities, for the discharge thereof: Having the Spirit poured out upon him, *Given unto him not by measure*, (as that Text hath it) *John* 3. 34. *in mensura*; that is, *Abundantly*: He being *Anointed with the oyle of gladness above his fellows*, (as the Psalmist saith of him) *Psal.* 45. 7. The other his *Proper Name*, given him at his *Circumcision*, as our *Christian* names (as we call them) are at our *Baptism*, *Jesus*, that is a *Saviour*. So the Angel interprets it, giving unto *Joseph* the reason of imposing it, *Mat.* 1. 27. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*. Here is the *Person*, of whom the Text saith that he came.

Q. 2.
How he
came.

Q. 2. And how is he said to have come?

A. For Answer, we may take notice of diverse *comings* of Christ mentioned in Scripture. Of which there are three most obvious, His coming in the *Flesh*, His coming in *Spirit*, His coming in *Glory*. His coming in the *Flesh*, to take our nature upon him. *Every Spirit that confesseth, that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God*, 1 *John* 4. 2. His coming in the *Spirit*, to dwell in the hearts of his people, to have a sweet Communion

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munion with them. *If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, Rev.*

3. 20. His coming in *Glory*. *Behold, he cometh with Clouds, Rev. 1. 7. Behold, I come quickly, Rev. 22. 12. I come to Judgment.*

Now, it is the first of these which we meet with here in the Text: The coming of Christ in the *Flesh*, his taking the nature of Man upon him, that, in that nature, he might execute the Office, and do the work, of a Mediator. Thus he came.

Q. 3. But *from whence* came he?

A. That is the third enquiry, which we find not expressly resolved in the Text, but implied. So it is, in every *Motion*, and every *Mutation*; there are two terms, the *terminus a quo et ad quem*, In a journey, a man cometh from one place to another: In a change of condition, a man passeth from one state to another. So was it here, Christ in his Incarnation, *he came down from Heaven*; So that Antient Creed tells us. And it is no other then what Christ himself tells his Disciples, *John 16. 27. I am come forth from the Father*. So he did according to his *Divinity*, as the *Son of God*, which yet, is warily to be understood. Not that he thus came from Heaven, by any locall mutation, any *change of place*; for as *God*, he was infinite in essence, filling all places in Heaven, and Earth, (as the Lord himself tells us, *Jer. 23. 24.*) and so could not properly be said

to

Q. 3.
From
whence
he came.

to leave the one, or come to the other. But onely by a *change of state*. So it was, that for a time, he divested and disrobed himself (as it were) of that Glory and Majesty, which he had with his Father, before the world was, (of which he speaketh, *John* 17. 5.) putting on the nature of man, taking it into a personal Union with his Godhead, *being manifested in the flesh*, (as the Apostle expresseth it) *1 Tim.* 3. last. Thus he came down from Heaven, *humbling Himself, taking upon him, the form of a Servant, and being in likeness of man*, (as we have it) *Phil.* 2. 7. Thus, as to his Divinity, he may be said to have come from Heaven. *The second man, is the Lord from Heaven*, (saith the Apostle, speaking of Christ, who in regard of his Godhead, was of a Celestial Original) *1 Cor.* 15. 47. But in respect of his *Humankind*, as *Man*, he may be said to have come from the *womb* of his Mother. There did he lodg for a time, the wonted time according to the course of nature; which being expired, he came forth, as the rest of the Sons of men do.

Q. 4.
Whither
he came.

Q. 4. And *whither* did he come?

A. That is the last Particular; which the Text resolves, *He came into the world. I am come forth from the Father, and am come into the world*, (saith the Text forecited) *John* 16. 28. that is, into this inferiour world: where, for a time, as *man*, yea, as *God-man* he lived,

ed, and conversed with the Sons of men, dwelling with them. *The word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us*, John 1. 14. Thus you see his *Journey*.

As briefly of his *Errand*. Where we shall take notice of those two things; For *what* ^{2.} *Christ's* Errand. he came, and for *whom*.

1. For *what* it was that he came; which ^{For} was, that he might be a Saviour of the world, ^{what he} *He came into the world to save it*. This was the ^{came: to} proper end of his first coming. To this end ^{be a Sa-} did God his *Father* send him. *We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son, to be the Saviour of the world*, 1 John 4. 14. And to this end, He himself came, making this his Design. *The Son of man is come, to save that which was lost*, (saith He of himself) *Mat. 18. 11*. Not to *Judge and Condemn* the world. This was neither his *Fathers* design, nor *His*: Not his *Fathers*, *God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved*, John 3. 17. Not *His*, *I came not to judge the world, but to save the world*. This indeed, shall be the end of his *Second coming*, to judg the whole world, and to condemn a great part of it; but the end of his first coming, was to save it. This was the thing, which he properly and directly intended. True it is, he was, and is an *occasion* of the falling and perishing of some. So old *Simeon* tells *Mary*, Luke 2. 34. *Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again*

again, of many in Israel. And the like the Apostle St. Peter, (taking it from the Prophet *Isay*) saith of him, *1 Pet. 2. 8.* where speaking of *Christ*, he calleth him, *A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.* But this is onely by accident, through the unbelief, and disobedience of those that will not receive Him, (as he there giveth the reason of it). Hereof *Christ* is onely the occasion, not the cause. This was a thing not intended by him, in his coming into the world. His Errand was to *Save*: Had it not been for this, he would never have left the Bosom of his Father. *He came into the world, to save the world*: The world of mankind indefinitely considered, or the world of his *Elect*. To *Save* them, From what? why, from their *Sins*. *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*; (saith that Text forecited). From the *Guilt* and *Power* of them. The former, by his *Merit* imputed to them; the latter, by his *Spirit* imparted to them. To save them from the *wrath* of God, and from *Eternal Condemnation*; and to obtain for them *Everlasting Salvation*: In which two, consisteth this *Salvation*, which *Christ* came to procure for his people. The former part whereof is *Privative*, to free them from the *wrath* of God. [*Even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come, 1 Thes. 1. last*] and from *everlasting Condemnation*, [*There is no condemnation*

nation to them which are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1.]. The latter part is *Positive*, a procuring of Eternal Salvation. *Being made perfect, he became the Author of Eternal Salvation, unto all them that obey him*, Heb. 5. 9. This was the end of Christs coming into the world, to be a *Saviour*, such a Saviour, a perfect Saviour, *Christ Jesus is come into the world to save.*

2. To save whom? That is the other Particular. To save sinners. Such are all men whom by nature, Jews, and Gentiles, *all under sin*. he came So the Apostle chargeth, and proveth it, *to save Rom. 3. 9. All guilty of Original Sin, having Adams sin imputed to them; In whom all have sinned*, (so that Text may fitly be read, Rom. 5. 12.) *in q̄*. Being in Him, as Branches in the Root, they sinned in Him. And have his *Corruption*, imparted and derived to them. And as of Original, so of Actual sin. *There is not a just man upon earth, that doth good and sinneth not*, Eccl. 7. 20. *In many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 2. None but may be called, as the people of the Jews are by the Prophet Isay, cap. 48. 8. *Transgressours from the Womb.*

But among these, some are greater sinners Some than others. Not only *Peccatores*, but *Pec-* greater *catosi*. So this word in the Text, *ἁμαρτωλοί* sinners is often rendred by *Stephan* in his Lexicon; than o- thers. and so it properly signifieth, *Habituated Sin-*ners, such as live in sin, and make a trade of it;

it; *Notorious Sinners*. So *Aretius* here looketh upon it, *Ἀμαρτωλοὶ dicuntur Notorii Peccatores*. And so we find it often used, as where *Publicans* and *Sinners* are put together, (as frequently they are;) by *sinners*, we are to understand great sinners, such as the *Publicans* generally were. And thus that *woman* (vulgarly taken for *Mary Magdalen*) is called a *sinner*, Luke 7. 39. *A woman in the City which was a sinner, came unto Jesus*. A woman of notorious levitie, a bad liver. Such she had been in truth, and this she was now thoroughly convinced of, bewailing her condition with tears, wherewith she washed the feet of her Saviour, (as there we find it).

Christ came to save the greatest of Penitent sinners. And such are the *sinners* that Christ is here said to come into the world to save. Sinners, all sinners, being as she was, convinced of their sinfulness. Now, though the greatest of sinners, yet being truly penitent, Christ came to save them. This is that which our Saviour tells the *Pharisees*, Mat. 9. When they were offended (as the story tells us they were) at his *eating*, & conversing with *Publicans* and *Sinners*; He willeth them to take notice, that this was the end of his coming into the world, to be a *Physitian*, not to the *whole*, but to the *sick*, Verse 12. to *call*, not the *Righteous*, but *Sinners* to Repentance, Verse 13. As for them, the *Pharisees*, they being in their own apprehensions (though nothing

nothing less in truth) whole and sound, just and righteous, no sinners; he had nothing to do with them, neither must they expect any benefit from him. No, they were *sinners*, *sinners*, such as were sick of sin, seeing and feeling themselves so to be, that he came to Save. So may we fitly look upon the word, here in the Text, *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*, such sinners.

Thus have I, with what brevity might be, dispatched the Doctrinal part of these two *Propositions* or *Conclusions*. That which now remains is the *Application*, which I shall direct three wayes, by way of *Information*, *Consolation*, *Exhortation*.

1. By way of *Information* or *Instruction*, we may from this one Saying, this one Doctr ine, learn many; from hence deducing and collecting diverse truths worth the taking notice of. As,

1. Touching the *two natures* in the Person of Christ, (both which *Aquinas* conceiveth here to be intimated to us) His *Divinity*, his *Humanity*. His *Divinity*, according to which he had a subsistence, a Being, before his Incarnation, before his coming into the world. How else should He be said to come into it? This imports (as I shewed) a *change*, though not of place, yet of state. His *Humanity*, he

Use 1.

By way of Information: 4. Doctrines deduced

1.

Touching the two natures in Christ.

[In mundum venit] explicem naturam,

sc. Divinitatis, in qua erat antequam in mundo appareret; & Humanitatis, in qua apparuit: Aquin. Com. in Text.

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came

came into the world, this inferior world, being there *manifested in the flesh*, living and conversing there with men, after the manner of men ; which cannot properly be said of his *God-head*, which being Infinite, filleth Heaven and Earth, and so is not capable of being confined to any place. This is proper to his *Humanitie*.

2. 2dly. From hence (as the Jesuite à *Lapide* well observes) may be inferred the invalidity and inefficacy of the *Law*, whether *Ceremoniall* or *Morall*, for the saving of any. Could *Moses* have done this, *Jesus Christ* should not have needed to *come* into the world, which he did upon this very accompt, to do that for the Sons of men which *Moses* could not do ; to procure that Justification and *Salvation* for them, which they could never have expected by the *Law*. *What the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, (or by a Sacrifice for sin, as the Margin in our Translation well explains it) condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, Rom. 8.3.4.* So it was : Man being fallen, by his fall he became weak, not being able now to fulfil the *Law*, so as to obtain Justification and *Salvation* by it. And thereupon it was that *Christ* took the Nature of man upon him, that in that Nature, he might do what mere Man could not do, that so the right-

The invalidity of the Law.

Contra Judæos, significat Legem, & Legis ceremoniarum inefficaciam esse ad salutem ; illam enim attulit Christus, Corn. a Lapide Com. in Text.

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righteousness of the Law, which could not be fulfilled by man, might this way be fulfilled in Him.

3dly. In the 3d place, See here (what the foreaid Author also mindeth us of) the *heinous nature of sin*; what a desperate disease it is, that must have a Physitian to come from Heaven to cure it; other way of cure there was none. All the Men and Angels in the world, could do nothing to it. They were all (as *Job* saith of his friends, *Job* 13. 4.) *Physitians of no value*. But the Son of God must come from Heaven to undertake this cure. *Magnus de calo venit Medicus* (saith *Augustine*) *quia magnus per totum orbem jacebat agrotans*. The great Physitian cometh down from Heaven, because man upon earth was desperately sick, in a hopeless and helpless condition, had He not slept in. Which (as the same Father there applies it) should make all that hear it afraid of sin, as a most deadly disease, not to rest and lye down in it, not to sleep *in strato peccati*, in the bed of sin, but to give ear to what *Paul* saith to them, *Ephes.* 5. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*.

3.
The heinous nature of sin.

Hinc discimus enormitatem peccati.

Idem ibid.

Augustine Serm. 9. de verbis Apostoli.

Cum audis Christum venisse in hunc mundum

ut peccatores salvos faceret, noli dormire

4ly and lastly, Here (as in a Glass) behold *in dulci strato peccati, sed audi Paulum dicentem, Surge qui dormis, & illuminabit te Christus*. *Ibid.*

4. we, (what we can never look too much, nor yet enough, upon) the *Grace*, the wonderful *Grace*, of God towards the Sons of men. *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men, (saith the Apostle) Tit. 2. 11. The Grace of God, His great Goodness and Mercy; that bringeth Salvation, eternal Salvation by and through Christ, hath appeared ἐπιφάνη, illuxit, it hath shined forth, clearly manifesting it self, and that to all men, all sorts of men, without distinction of Nation, Sex, Age or Condition. This it hath done, in this coming of Jesus Christ into the world to save sinners. In nothing more, in nothing so much. Many wayes hath the Grace and Favour of God, appeared unto mankind. It did so in his Creation, in making him little lower than the Angels, and Crowning him with Glory and Honour, making Him to have Dominion over the works of His hands, and putting all things under His feet, (as the Psalmist sets it forth) Psalm. 8. 5. 6. In making Him after his own Image. So God created man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he Him, Gen. 1. 27. As like unto his Maker, as a Creature could be. But behold, this Grace shineth more clearly in his Redemption, in finding out a way, such a way and means as he did, for the delivering of him from Hell and Death, and the procuring of his eternal Salvation. No Grace like this, χάρις ἡ σωτηρία, this saving Grace of God.*

Behold here (what you have lately heard more largely of, from that Text, Gal. 4. 4.) The Grace of God the Father, in sending his Son upon this Errand. *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* What an expression of Love was this? In this was manifested the love of God towards us, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him, 1 John 4. 9. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, Verse 10. Behold love, wonderful love! So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c. John 3. 16. Such an expression of Love as never was. Herein did his kindness appear. *After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared,* Tit. 3. 4. viz. The kindness of God the Father, who is there (as often elsewhere) called *God our Saviour*; and that, as upon some other accompts, so chiefly upon this, because He sent His Son upon this Errand, to procure and effect Salvation for the Sons of men (as Grotius well expounds it). Herein did His Love, His Kindness appear; His Grace, His Rich Grace, the exceeding Riches of his Grace! So our Apostle (not knowing how to speak highly enough of it) sets it forth, Ephes. 2. 7. *That he might shew the exceeding Riches of his* Grace,

1.
The
Grace of
God the
Father
in send-
ing of
Christ.

Grotius
Annot. in
1 Tim. 1. 1

Grace, in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus, ὑπερβάλλοντα πλῆτον τῆς χάριτος, exceeding all our apprehensions. Such was that Grace which God the Father shewed to the Sons of men, in his kindness towards them in Christ Jesus, in sending him to be a Saviour for them.

Set forth
in 3 Particulars.

Many things there are, which do highly commend and set forth, this Grace of God to us. Three of which, and three Principal, we have a hint of in the Text.

1. 1st. Take we notice *whom* it was that he sent, *Christ Jesus*; his Son, his own son: *He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all*, Rom. 8. 32. Yea, his *only* Son, his *only begotten Son*, (as that obvious Text forenamed hath it) *Job* 3. 16. God had many Sons, some by *creation*; such were the *Angels*, whom we find called *the Sons of God*, *Job* 38. 7. Such was *Adam*, *which was the Son of God*, *Luke* 3. *last*. And he hath many sons by *Adoption*, to which he Predestinated them from Eternity, *Eph.* 1. 5. But he had but one son by *Generation*. This was *Jesus Christ*, *ἕως ὁ μόνογενής*, the *only begotten Son of GOD*. A Jewel more dear than all the World besides. Yet God, his Father, spared him not, but put him upon this service, to be a Saviour to lost Mankind. And what *love* was this? Hereby did Father *Abraham* manifest the sincerity and height of his Affection to his God, that having but one Son, he

he was willing to part with him, to offer him up at his Command. *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thy only Son, from me;* (saith the Angel to him) *Gen. 22. 12.* And in the like way, hath God the Father manifested his Affection to the sons of Men, (that being but a Type of this) in not withholding his son, his only son, from us; but giving Him for us, to take our Nature upon him, to doe and suffer what he did, for our sakes.

2dly. Take we notice for whom it was that Christ was sent, for sinners (saith the Text), men who nothing less then deserved such a favour at the hands of God, they being not onely strangers, but enemies to Him. *When we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, Rom. 5. 10.* And how doth this commend the Love of God to us? *God commendeth his love towards us, that while we were yet sinners, Christ dyed for us,* (Verse 8. of that Chapter).

3dly. To these add the Benefit which Christ came to procure for these sinners, which is Salvation to save sinners. To save them (as you have heard) from the wrath of God, and from everlasting Damnation. And to procure for them everlasting Happiness and Blessedness. Salvation, the greatest of benefits that man was capable of receiving, comprehending under it, *Justification, Sanctification, Glorification.* Wonderful was this

2.
For whom he was sent: for sinners.

3.
The benefit to be procured by Him, Salvation.

kindness in God the Father, thus to send his only Son, for such unworthy creatures upon such an accompt.

2.
The
Grace of
God the
Son, in
coming
upon
such an
Errand.

II. And behold no less in God the Son. That being thus sent, he should come as he did. That, coming forth from his Father, leaving his Bosom (as it were) in which he had lain from Eternitie; he should come into the world, taking upon him the nature of man, yea, *the form of a Servant*, so humbling himself as he did. What a favour? specially that he should come into such a world, where he well knew what entertainment he should meet with, how he should be rejected! So he was by those whom he looked upon as his own people: *He came unto his own, and his own received him not*, Joh. 1. 11. The people of the *Jews*, who were God's own peculiar people, whom he had chosen out of all Nations of the World, (*You onely have I known*); yet so ungrateful were they, that when this Son of God, being sent by his Father upon such an Errand, came to tender his service unto them, they would not receive him, they would not acknowledge him to be the *Messias*. Thus was this *living Stone* (the Foundation-Stone) though chosen of God and precious, yet disallowed of men, (as St. Peter hath it, 1 Pet. 2. 4.) *He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him, he was despised, and we esteemed him not*.

not, (so the Prophet *Isay*, foreseeing what entertainment the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, should meet withal, in and from the world, setteth it forth) *Isa.* 53. 3. Thus was he sleighted through the whole course of his life. And in the end of it how abused? Crowned with Thorns, Buffeted, Spit upon, and after Crucified; suffering that painful, shameful, accursed Death of the Cross. Now, all this he foresaw before he came into the world, as he foretold it when he was come into it. So he did to his *Disciples*, *Luke* 17. 25. *The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of this Generation.* And at another time, he giveth them a particular accompt of what things he should Suffer. So we find it, *Mat.* 20. 17. where going up to *Jerusalem*, we read how he took the *Twelve Disciples* apart in the way, and said unto them, *Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief Priests, and unto the Scribes, and they shall condemn him to Death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to Mock, and to Scourge, and to Crucifie him.* All this he knew before it came to pass, yea, before he came into the world, he knew what measure he should meet with, in it. Yet for all this he came into this world to undertake this service, *He came into the world to save sinners*; Such ungrateful wretches as there he met with. Thus it was, (as *Augustine* excellently sets it forth). *Homines*
de-

Homines desperate agrotabant, &c. Men were desperately sick, and by reason of their sickness having lost their Reason, they fell foul upon their Physitian, striking of him, yea killing him; yet for all this, when he was thus used by them, he was still a Physitian to them. *Vates perdidit, etiam medicum cedebant:* yet a curer of them. *Patiebatur phreneticum, nec deserebat agrotum,* He patiently bore with his frantick patient, not deserting him in his sickness. *Tenebatur, alligabatur, percutiebatur, iridebatur, suspendebatur; & medicus erat;* He was held, he was bound, he was smitten, he was mocked, he was hanged upon the Cross; and yet for all this, he was and would be a Physitian, even to them by whom he was thus used, *making a Medicine of his own Blood, for the curing of them that shed it.* And, ô what Clemency, what Love, what Favour was this to every of us, who hear this saying here in the Text, That *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,* such sinners! Admire we this Grace, this riches of Grace, this exceeding riches of Grace, which this our Saviour hath herein shewed to such unworthy creatures! This, by way of Information or Instruction.

Use 2. In the 2d. place, by way of *Consolation:* Is Christ Jesus come into the world, and that upon this Errand, to *save sinners*? What comfort doth this speak to all truly penitent sinners? *Penitent* sinners, I say. Such, and only

only such they are to whom this Consolation belongeth. Not to all sinners, not to such as are obdurate and impenitent, such as live and lie in sin, making a trade of it. Let not such snatch at any crumb of this Bread of Life, any morsel of this Consolation. All the comfort that I can from hence give unto them, is only this, that there is a possibility of Salvation for them. Herein are they one degree more happy, or rather less miserable, than the Devills and damned Spirits, which being cast into the Prison of Hell, are there fast bound in those *everlasting chains of Darkness, reserved to the judgement of the Great day*, (as St. Peter, and St. Jude, set forth the condition of the fallen Angels, 2 Pet. 2. 4. Jude v. 6.) in a desperate condition past praying for, shut out from all hope, all possibility of Salvation. So is it not as yet with you, you obstinate sinners. How soon it may be so, that you know not; going on in your sinful wayes and courses, you may be surprized and snatcht away by Death, (as many daily are) and that will cut off the thread of your hope, putting you into the like condition, beyond all possibility of Mercy. But as yet, I shall not wholly shut the door of hope against you. Some hope as yet you have, though not so long as you continue such. Living and dying without Repentance there is no hope for you. Let not any such then pervert and abuse this
Saying,

Saying, this Doctrine of Christs coming into the World. True, he came into the World to save sinners, but not such as you are; not obstinate sinners. As for such, What have they to do with Grace? What have they to do with Mercy? What have they to do with Salvation? Let them look for that which waits for them, Indignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, which shall be upon every soul of Man that doth Evil (as the Apostle tells them, Rom. 2. 8, 9.) This is the portion of Obstinate sinners, such as make Jesus Christ, and his coming into the world, to be (as it were) a pander to their Lusts, from hence taking occasion to continue in Sin; let them never look to have any benefit by his coming. He shall one day come to be their Judge; he never came to be their Saviour. All the comfort which distilleth from this Breast of Consolation, that springs from this Fountain, this Well of Salvation, is appropriated to the broken-hearted, truly penitent sinner; to such as being convinced of Sin, feel the weight and burthen of it, being weary, and heavy-laden under it; desiring earnestly to be freed and delivered from it; and that not only from the guilt and punishment, but also from the power, and in-beeing of it; being like affected with this our Apostle, who crieth out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? Rom. 7. 24. Such as desire to be saved,

not

not only from Death and Hell, but also from *sin*; To such *sinners*, all such, and only such, doth this *faithful Saying* speak abundant and everlasting Consolation. For your sakes did the Eternal Son of God come into the world, to seek and to save such as you are.

And therefore lay you hold on this comfort which is here held forth unto you, not fearing to bring it home, and make Application of it to your selves. It matters not what your sins have been or are, what for number, what for nature, how many, how great, let not all this discourage. Behold here a *Plaster* as large as the *Soar*; a *Cordial* which being taken down, will serve to bear up the heart against fainting, *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*. Let not thy sins then deter thee from laying hold upon this Salvation; which as it was merited for thee, so is it held forth and tendred to thee by this thy Saviour. Thou art a *sinner*, a great *sinner*, let not this drive thee from *Jesus Christ*, but to him. Such they are whom he came to Save. Wer't thou not such a one thou couldst have no benefit by him. This it is that maketh thee a Subject capable of receiving benefit from him.

Penitent
sinners
to apply
this Do-
ctrine to
them-
selves.

As for those *righteous persons*, who are so in their own eyes, their own apprehensions, Christ will have nothing to do with them, neither let them expect to be the happier for him. The proud *Pharisee* goeth as he cometh, whilest

And on-
ly they.

whilest the poor self-condemning *Publican*, goeth away justified. *I tell you*, (saith our *Saviour*, speaking by way of *Parable* unto certain which trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, as the 9th verie hath it) *This man went down to his house justified rather than the other*, Luke 18. 14. The one came justified, viz. in himself, boasting of his own righteousness, but goeth away a sinner; the other cometh a sinner, confessing himself so to be, but goeth away justified, viz. by God, being absolved from all his sins. The one cometh empty, but goeth away full, the other cometh full, but goeth away empty. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away*, (saith *Mary* in her Song) Luke 1. 53. Great comfort to all truly penitent, humbled, broken hearted, self-condemning sinners. For such as you it was that *Jesus Christ came into the world*, to be a *Saviour unto you*.

This Sal-
vation
not to be
rejected,
or neg-
lected.

Only see that you do not judge your selves unworthy of this Salvation, by neglecting of it. *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* Heb. 2. 3. much less by rejecting of it, putting it from you. This was that which *Paul* and *Barnabas* charged upon the *Jews* as a high contempt; that word which had by them been Preached to them, they put it from them, so judging themselves unworthy of everlasting Life, Acts 13. 46. This did they by their rejecting, not receiving of this

this *Doctrine*, the *Doctrine* of Salvation by Christ, thereby shewing themselves to be unworthy of it. And the like do all they, who hearing this *faithful saying* worthy of all *acceptation*, this saving *Doctrine*; do not receive it, embrace it, bringing it home to themselves, and making a right use of it. Such *neglect*, such *contempt*, let every of us beware of, giving unto this *Doctrine*, this *faithful Saying*, such *acceptation* as it is worthy of, even *All acceptation*.

Let that be the word of *Exhortation*, which give me leave to press with what earnestness I may or can; we have all of us, as at other times often, so now again heard of this *faithful Saying*, That Christ Jesus is come into the world to save sinners. This we have received into the *Ear*, O but suffer we it not to die there, to vanish in the hearing; but give we unto it (as I said) such *acceptation*, as it is worthy of, even *all acceptation*, receiving it by all *ways* and *means*.

By all *ways* (I say), meaning all lawfull and useful *ways*. Such are not all the ways wherein this *Doctrine* is by some received. Let me (by the way) give you a hint of one or two of them, giving you withal a *Caveat* that you do not so receive this *Saying*.

I. Receive it not by way of doubtful *Disputation*. In such a way this our Apostle forbiddeth Christians to receive their weak brethren, *Rom. 14. 1.* Him that is weak in the faith

Use 2.
Exhortation. Receive we this Doctrine.

Receiving it by all lawfull and useful ways.

Some ways not such: wherein this Doctrine is not to be received.

faith receive you, but not to doubtful Disputations. Not troubling and disquieting them with needlesse and uselesse scruples, with Ambiguities and Perplexities. And in such a way let not us receive *Jesus Christ*, nor this *Doctrin* concerning his Coming into the world, by troubling our selves or others with needlesse and uselesse Questions, over-eagerly contending about, what cannot certainly be determined. Of these, let me take notice of two or three.

4. Need-
less and
uselesse
Questi-
ons
touching
Christs
coming.

1. Such is that Controversie concerning the *time of his coming*: When it was that he came into the world, that he was Born, upon what *day*, or in what *week*, or in what *month*; which, though it hath been by learned Heads, with all possible Industry, searched into, and by some over-eagerly debated; yet can it not be certainly determined. So, that great *Criticke* passeth his censure upon it, *Unius Dei est, non hominis, definire*. This is a thing which God alone can do. And our Church, whilst in its Liturgie for several dayes, it still maketh use of the same words, That *God gave his Son [as this day] to be Born of a pure Virgin*: It seemeth to intimate unto us, that though it had appointed a day for the celebrating of the memorial thereof, yet it did not bind us to believe, that that was the precise day of His birth. Which our late Reverend Bishop yieldeth, not to be certainly known. This is a Secret which

Scaliger
de emend
Temp.

* Bishop
Halls
Letter
concern-
ing the
Feast of
the Nati-
vity.

God

God hath thought fitting to be concealed from us (upon what account, I will not say:) And therefore, Be we not overcurious in our enquiries after it. Let it be enough for us (which we are sure of) that a time there was; a time precisely set down, and appointed for his Coming; and *when that fulness of time was come*, God sent forth his Son (as the Apostle tells us, Gal. 4. 4.) This is *πῶς λέγει*, a faithful saying, requiring our firm Belief. But so doth not that circumstance of Time; which being not *tanti*, of any great concernment, leave we it as we find it, not troubling our selves, or others, about it.

2. And, little better is that which some have made a matter of Debate; *Whether if man had not sinned, Christ should have come into the world.* This (a) Aquinas, (and after him Estius) writing upon the Text taketh notice of. Which he, following the generality of the Fathers and School-men, here and elsewhere, determines *Negatively*. And so doth our (b) Mr. Calvin, therein opposing *Osiander*, who contended for the *Affirmative*. And this they do, not without a probable Argument from the Text, which tells us, *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* So then, * had there been no *principali, cessat effectus*. C. a Lapid. in Text. *Nulla causa fuit veniendi Christo Domino, nisi, peccatores salvos facere.* August. de verbis Apost. Sermon. 9. *Si homo non peccasset, filius hominis non venisset.* Ibid. Sermon. 6.

2.
Whether
if man
had not
sinned,
Christ
should
have
come.
a) Aquin.
Sum. p. 3.
Q. 1 A. r. 3
(b) Calv.
Inst. lib.
2. cap. 12.
* Cessante
fine prin-

fin, there had been no need of his coming. *Tolle morbum, & medicinâ non erit opus* (saith the *Gloss* upon it) Take away the *disease*, and there shall be no need of the *Physitian*, or *Medicine*. So, take away sin out of the world, and there should have been no need of Christs coming into the world. But this we may well look upon as a Point not worth the debating, inasmuch as it maketh a *Supposition* contrary to Gods *Ordination*, according to which all things, that are, come to pass (as the same * Author well concludes it.)

* *Hæc
Questio
non est
magnæ*

authoritatis, quia Deus ordinavit fienda secundum quod res fienda erant. Aquinas in Text.

3. Whether his Coming was Necessary. 3. And such is that other, about the Necessity of Christs coming, Whether it was necessary that he should come, and undertake this work? Whether some other way might not have been found for the effecting hereof? A curious and vain enquiry. Sure we are, we could never have found another way. And this is the way which God, in his infinite Wisdom, hath pitched upon. So as there is none other Name under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, (as St. Peter tells the *Jews*, *Acts* 4. 12.) ; no other way or means appointed by God for our Salvation. And here let us rest.

4. And

4. And to these I might add that other Debate about the *extent of Christs Death*; whether he thereby intended an *Universal Redemption*. This we know it lately hath been (I wish it may not still so be) eagerly contended for by *Arminius* and his followers. And probably among other Texts of Scripture, they may call forth this for the maintaining of it, where it is said, That *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*. Now such are all men, and therefore Christ came to save all. A needless contest. It is enough that he came, to save all such sinners as we have heard of, all truly penitent sinners? In this we are all agreed; and in this let us rest. In such a way, Let us not receive this Saying, this Doctrine; not by way of *doubtful Disputation*.

Much less (in the 2d place) so receive it as to *abuse it to our own Destruction*. So do some (as I have hinted already) and it is to be feared, not a few, who make use of this Doctrine, as a *Pillow*, to sleep securely upon in the bed of sin. Hearing that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*; From hence they take liberty to continue in sin. Far be this from us. *What shall we say then?* (saith the Apostle) *shall we continue in sin that Grace may abound?* God forbid, Rom. 6. 1, 2. *M'n γινωσκο, Let it not be*. Far be it from any of us, to give entertainment to such a thought; thus Spider-like to suck Poyson

from this sweetest Flower. This is the readiest way to shut us out from ever receiving any benefit from Christ, who (as the Text saith) *came into the world to save sinners*; to save them (as you have heard) *from their sins*; and that from the power, as well as from the *guilt* and *punishment* of them. They who are not Saved from the former of these, let them never look to be saved from the latter. In such wayes then, take we heed of receiving this *Saying*.

This
Doctrine
how to
be re-
ceived.

But (now to proceed in the Exhortation propounded) *Receive we it in all lawful and useful wayes*, yielding it such *acceptation* as it is *worthy of*. Having heard it with the outward *Ear*, now receive we it into the inward *Man*, into our heads and hearts. Such entertainment we are ready to give to our welcome guests; we account our best rooms mean enough for them; we will not suffer them to stand without, or yet admit them only into the *Hall*, but receive them into the *Parlour*. Now, behold here the best *Guest* we can give entertainment to, the *Lord Jesus*, who came from Heaven upon the welcomest Errand, the procuring of our Salvation! O suffer him not to stand without, as *Jews*, and *Turks*, *Pagans* and *Infidels* do; who being professed enemies to Christ, will give no entertainment to Him; or yet, as persons grossly & wilfully ignorant, who hear of Him, but regard not to know Him; to know what

he

he Was, what he hath Done, what he Suffered. Nor yet, think we it enough to let him into the *Hall*, the outward room of the Soul, which is the mode of meer formal Nominal Christians, who content themselves with a General and Superficial knowledge of this mystery of Godliness; Let us receive him into the *Penetralia*, into our inwardmost rooms, setting open all the doors of our Souls, those *everlasting doors* (as the Psalmist calls them) Psal. 24. 7. *doors of Eternitie*, which is mystically to be understood of the Souls of the faithful. Set we open these *Doors that the King of Glory may enter in*; Receiving *Jesus Christ* and this Doctrine concerning him, (as I said) into all the inwardmost rooms of our *Souls*, into our *Understandings*, *Judgments*, *Memories*, *Wills*, *Affections*; All which, This Saying is worthy of:

1. Into our *Understandings*, that we may have a right apprehension of the Doctrine of *Christ's Incarnation*. A Doctrine necessary to be known by all that would have benefit by Him and by his Coming. Rest we not our selves contented then, with such a general knowledge as I spake of, to know that Christ is come into the world; but seek after a clear and distinct knowledge of this mystery, to know *what* that Christ was, *how* he came, *whence* he came, *whither* he came, to what *end* he came, and for *whose sake* he came, and how he hath effected the work he came which about.

2. And understanding this, Labour to be thoroughly convinced of the truth hereof; so receiving this Truth into our *Judgments* looking upon it as a *Faithful Saying*, yielding a full and firm assent and consent unto it. Not entertaining any doubtful hesitations concerning it. All which our Apostle here maketh it his design to exhortate, and drive out of the hearts of Christians, holding forth this unto them as a most infallible Doctrine, laying it as a sure foundation, which they may safely build upon. And so do we, taking this for an *ὁμολογούμενον*, a *Principle of our Religion*, the truth whereof is not to be questioned; Every of us labour thus to get our hearts established in the belief hereof.

3. Thus receiving it into our *Understandings* and *Judgments*, Receive we it also into our *Memories*, lodging and laying it up there as a most precious Treasure of inestimable value, and singular use. Remember it, and make use of it as occasion shall be offered. Holding it forth as a *Buckler*, for the repelling of those fiery Darts, those Satanical Temptations, which he is ready to inject, for the disquieting and troubling the Souls of poor sinners with the apprehension of their sins, The Quantitie and Qualitie, the Multitude and Magnitude, the Number and Nature of them, which being let into the Soul without a Divine support, may be enough

nough to sinck it into the Gulph of Desperation. Against all these, oppose we this faithful Saying; Remember the Consolation it holdeth forth, That *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*. A true *Catholicon*, a Sovereign *Cordial*, proper for what ever Faintings the Soul may be subject to.

Proinde quoties nobis in mentem veniet ulla de pec-

catorum remissione dubitatio, hoc velut clypeo fortiter eam repellere discamus. Calvin. Com. in Text.

4. Thus lodging it in our *Memories*, Receive we it also into our *Wills* and *Affections*, *Imbracing* it, *resting* upon it, *rejoycing* in it, and being *thankful* for it.

4. Into the Will and affections

i. *Imbracing* it, as the most acceptable, the most welcome Tidings that ever were brought unto the world. Had not *Jesus Christ* come into the world, better we had never come into it. Were it not for the *Sun*, what were the world but a *Dungeon*? And were it not for this *Sun of Righteousness*, which is risen upon earth, we must have late in darkness to all Eternitie. His *coming* is our *reviving*. Even as the coming of the Sun in the Spring time is unto Hearbs and Plants, which before were seemingly dead; such is the coming of *Jesus Christ* unto us, who, without Him, were in a state of Death, really dead. How welcome then should the tidings hereof be unto us? How ready should we receive this Doctrine? O, were this Doctrine to be Preached to the Spirits in Prison, to the

i.

Imbracing it.

Divels and Damned Souls in Hell, That *Jesus Christ* was come to *save them*, how welcome would it be unto them? And why not unto us, who, were it not for this Coming, should erelong be in their condition?

2.
Resting
upon it.

2. And thus imbracing it, now *rest* upon it; making it the *sheat-Anchor* of our Souls hope, riding by it in all storms, flying unto *Jesus Christ*, receiving him as our *Saviour*, clasping him in the arms of our Faith, resting upon him for Salvation. This is true justifying *saving faith*; not barely to *believe him*, to believe that Christ is come into the world, but to believe *in Him*, and *on Him*. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth on him*, should not perish, Joh. 3. 16. He that *believeth on him*, is not condemned. Vers. 18. He that *believeth on the Son* hath everlasting life; Vers. 36. Still *is* *and*, *in eum*, in him, on him. As for believing *him*, this is no more than the Divels do. I know thee *who thou art*, the Holy one of God, (saith that unclean Spirit) Mark 1. 24. Will we have any benefit by him, see that we believe *on him*; receiving him as our Saviour, casting our Souls upon the allsufficiency of his Merit, there resting for the pardon of all our sins, and the Salvation of our Souls.

3.
Rejoyce-
ing in it.

3. And thus resting upon him, now *re-joyce* in him, in this his Coming. *Rejoyce greatly, O Daughter of Sion, shout for Joy, O Daugh-*

Daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee, he is Just, and having Salvation, (saith the Prophet Zacharie to the Church) *Zach. 9. 9.* This coming of Christ in the Flesh is a matter of great Joy (as you have heard.) And so let it be entertained by us. Rejoyce we in this our *King* and *Saviour*. Rejoycing not with a *carnal* and *sensual* joy (such as that joy is wherewith the memory of this great benefit is by some, and too many, celebrated at this Season of the year :) but a *spiritual* joy, suitable to the benefit which he came to procure for us, which is spiritual and eternal Salvation. In the apprehension hereof, let all true Believers, who have received Christ into their hearts, exult and rejoyce; rejoycing in this their *God* and *Saviour* (as *Mary* saith she did, *Luke 1. 47.*) joyning in consort with that multitude which, attending upon him in his Coming to *Jerusalem*, cried, saying, *Hosannah to the Son of David, Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Hosannah in the Highest!* *Mat. 21. 9.*

4. And thus rejoycing in it, Be we thankful for it, really thankful; studying how to expresse our gratitude for so great a Favour. Not by letting loose the raines to all kind of licentiousness; which hath been, and I fear still is, the practice of too many, who at this Season of the year, take greater liberty to abuse the Creatures of God, and to

4. Being truly thankful for it.

to waste, and mis-spend their precious time, in vain, if not sinful, Recreation and Disports, than at any other times; as if the end of Christs coming had been, not to bind Satan, but to let him loose; not to save sinners from their sins, but to indulge them in them. Not so; but by endeavouring to walk answerably to so great a favour, so as becometh the redeemed of the Lord. All of us taking out and practising that Lesson, which our Apostle telleth us, this Grace of God teacheth us, *Tit. 2. 11. The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men,* (this saving Grace of God, in sending his Son upon this Errand, which hath now under the Gospel appeared to all men, not only Jews, but Gentiles) *teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* To this end it was, (as you have heard) *That Christ came into the world to save sinners,* to save them from their sins, from the power as well as from the guilt of them; to redeem them from all iniquity; *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,* (as we have it) *Tit. 2. 14. that, being delivered out of the hands of all our enemies,* (our Spiritual enemies, Sin, Satan, Hell, Death) *we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, before him, all the dayes of our*

our life, (as Zacharias hath it in his Song)
Luk. I. 74, 75.

And thus have I now done with the former part of the Text, the *Doctrin*e as it is here both *commended* and *propounded*. Now pass we to the latter, the *Application* which the Apostle here maketh of this *Doctrin*e to himself. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, [of whom I am chief.]*

The Second Part.

Here have we that which my eye was chiefly upon, when I now took this Text in hand; wherein our Apostle bringeth home this general Truth, which he had before propounded and commended, to himself, by a particular *Application*. Therein * (as *Aretius* well observes) setting us a *Patern* *Doctrin*e for our *Imitation*, teaching us what use we are to make of the Scriptures, and of all the sayings therein contained. And specially of those *saving Truths*, which there we meet with. Not contenting our selves with a general notion of them, but bringing them home to our selves, making them our own, by such a special and particular *Application*.

Part 2d.

Pauls

particular Application of this general

Doctrin

self.

* Obs.

A Patern for our Imitation.

Communi regula sese involvit :

atque hic verus Scripturae usus est ut nobis applicemus salutaria, quo spem habeamus de salute nostra. Aret. Com. in Text.

With

Reas.
Appli-
cation
maketh
saving
Truths
effectual.

Without this, the most saving Truths will not be saving to us. A *Medicine*, though never so Sovereign a *Plaster*, though never so Sanative, yet if onely looked upon, and so layed aside, if not taken down, if not applied, in an ordinary way it will do the Patient no good. The most saving Truths, the most cordial and comfortable promises in the Book of God, if not brought home to a man's self, will be of no avail to him. It is the *Application* of these Truths, these *faithful Sayings*, that maketh them effectual. Particular Persons, receive no benefit from general Doctrines, without such a particular Application.

Applic.

This use then make we of all those Truths, which we meet withal in the Book of God. The *Instruções*, *Counsels*, *Threatnings*, *Promises*, which are there held forth; suffer we them not to lie by us, think it not enough to read them, or hear of them, and to yield a general assent to them, but bring them home, make them our own. So doth our Apostle here in the Text, having held forth this Doctrine unto others, of Christs coming into the world to save sinners, he reflects upon what he had said, bringing it home to himself, ranking himself in the list, yea in the forefront of those sinners, whom Christ came to save. *Of whom I am chief,*

Paul, the
first of
sinners.

ὧν πρῶτος εἰμι ἐγώ, *Quorum Primus ego sum,*
Of whom I am First.

The

The First? What then, was Paul the first of sinners? were there not others before him? Surely yea, *Quot homines tot peccatores*, so many men as there had been, so many sinners. The first man, and the first woman, they were the first sinners. How then saith Paul here, that he was the first?

In Answer to this, *Aquinas* here tells us of certain Hereticks, who dreaming of a Pythagorical Metempsychosis, a transmigration, a flitting of Souls out of one body into another, they conceived that the Soul of Adam, the first man, might be transmitted into Paul's body, and so upon that accompt, he might say of himself, that he was the first sinner, having in himself the Soul of the first man. But this is but a Dream and so we leave it, which (if need were) might be sufficiently confuted (as that Author observes) from that one Text of the Apostle, *Rom. 9. 11.* where speaking of Children not born, he describeth them to be such as had neither done good nor evil. So then, the Soul is not before the Body. But letting that go.

More genuinely. Paul saith here of himself, that he was the first of sinners; *Primus non tempore, sed magnitudine*, (so the Author aforesaid, and diverse others, after *Augustine*, rightly resolve it :) the first not in time, not

Q.
How said
so to be.

A.
An Heretical
Dream.
*Hic dicit
Hereticus, quod
anima
Adæ fuit
in Paulo,
et transi-
vit de
corpore in
corpus.
Aquin.
Expos.
in Text.*

A. 2.

Paul the
first, that
is the
greatest
of sinners.

* *Quid*

in

in order, but in respect of the *magnitude* and *greatness* of his sinnes. So are we here to understand the word (as often elsewhere;) *πρῶτος* being put for *μέγιστος*, the *first*, that is, the *greatest*, the *chief of sinners*, (as our Translation hath it) *Of whom I am chief.*

Q.
How
Paul
saith this
of him-
self.

But, so looking upon it, the Question is yet unresolved. For, how saith the Apostle this? or how could he say it of himself, that he was the *chief of sinners*? What, were there not others, who had been, (or were) as great, or greater sinners than he? How then saith he, that he was the *chief*?

A.
To this it is answered by some, and dis-
Hespeaks verse; This he speaks *ὑπερβολικῶς*, *Hyperba-*
Hyper- *lically*, out of his great *modesty* and *Humi-*
bolically *lity*, so thinking, and so speaking of him-
out of his self,
great Hu-

mility. *Dictum est ὑπερβολικῶς ex summa modestia*: Grotius
Annot. in Text. *Hoc dicit ex humilitate.* Aquin.

Obs.
Christi-
ans to
think &
speak
meanly
of them-
selves.
And so looking upon it, Let him herein
again be propounded as a *pattern for the imi-*
tation of all Christians; teaching them how to
think, & how to speak of themselves, meanly,
lowly, preferring others before themselves.
So runs this our Apostles direction, *Phil. 2.3.*
In lowliness of mind, let each esteem other bet-
ter than himself. Ita jussit, ita gessit. This
he would have others do; and this, Himself
here doth; so not only giving us a *Rule*,
but setting us a *Pattern.* Paul, what he was
he

the Churches of God well know; a *Chosen Vessel*, an eminent *Saint*, an eminent *Apostle*; one of the choicest Instruments that ever Christ made use of; eminent for Gifts, eminent for Graces; yet he, when he cometh to speak of himself, how doth he undervalue himself? Sometimes professing, and acknowledging himself to be the meanest of the Apostles, and not worthy of that Honour. *I am the least of the Apostles, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle* (saith he) 1 Cor. 15. 9. And sometimes the meanest of Saints. *Unto me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is this grace given*, Eph. 3. 8. And here he acknowledgeth himself to be the chief of sinners. Thus speaking of his Gifts and Graces, he thinks he cannot speak too meanly of them; but speaking of his sins, he thinks he cannot speak too highly of them. He is not more in extenuating the one, then in aggravating the other: Such was his Modesty, such was his Humility. *Maximus Doctorem, maximus peccatorem*. Though he was an Apostle, a great Apostle; yea, without disparagement to any, inferiour to none, (which we find him elsewhere standing upon) being by his Adversaries put upon it, to Vindicate his Reputation, he sticks not to equalize himself with the very chiefest Apostle: *I suppose* (saith he) *I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles*, 2 Cor. 11. 5. And again chap. 12. v. 11. *In nothing am I behind the*

the very chiefest Apostles; meaning *James*, and *John*, and *Peter*, (whose Disciples and Followers diverse then professed themselves to be) yet here he reckons himself among the chief of sinners, nay, of sinners *The Chief*. Thus was he (as *Aretius* here saith of him) *in peccato maximus, in ministerio minimus, ubique tamen inter homines magnus*; though every where highly esteemed of among men, yet in his own apprehension, the least of *Saints*, and the greatest of *Sinners*. In himself *nothing*. So he there tells his *Corinthians* in the Text last named; where, whilst he extolleth his Ministry, he debaseth himself. *In nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing*. Nothing out of Christ, nothing in himself, of no worth, no value.

Christi-
ans to
prefer o-
thers be-
fore
them-
selves.

Such mean thoughts should Christians entertain of themselves, thinking more meanly of themselves, than of others. So doth that wise *Agur*, Prov. 30. 2. *Surely* (saith he) *I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man*. *Agur*, a Prophet, divinely inspired, (as the Verse foregoing there seemeth to intimate, where those Sayings of his, in that Chapter, are called his *Prophecy*) a wise and learned man, indued with a great measure, not only of Natural and Moral, but of Divine knowledge; yet see how he undervalues himself, how meanly he thought of himself. And the like did *Asaph*,

Asaph, or *David* (uncertain whether), whom we find confessing to his God, *So foolish was I, and ignorant (saith he) I was, as a Beast before thee*, Psal. 73.22. And after the same mode did our Apostle here speak of himself, acknowledging himself to be not onely a sinner, or a great sinner, but the *chief of sinners*.

In which Expression, let not any think, or suspect, that he spake of himself otherwise than he meant and thought. It is Mr. *Calvines* Caveat which he giveth upon it; *Cave ne existimes, modestie causâ Apostolum mentitum esse*; Far be it from any to entertain a thought, that *Paul* here should, out of modesty, speak otherwise than he thought and meant. Paul not speaking otherwise of himself than he thought.

And whilst we do not, nor dare not, censure or suspect him upon any such account, see that we our selves be not at any time guilty of the like. Take heed of such vain, airy, empty complements, as are too common with some, who will speak (it may be) meanly of themselves, when as they think nothing less; haply debasing themselves, that so they may draw the greater and higher commendation from others. Far was this from our Apostle. Certainly, this Confession of his, had not more modesty than sincerity, not more humility than reality in it. What he here acknowledgeth, he did it not with his Tongue, or Pen onely, but

E

with

with, and from his Heart. A hearty confession it was, *ex intimo cordis sensu deprompta*, (as Calvin saith of it;) fetched even from the bottom of his Heart, springing from an inward sense and feeling of what he confessed.

Veram hic non minus quam humilem confessionem edere voluit, atque ex intimo cordis sensu depromptam. Calvin. Com. in Text.

Q. But if so, the Question will yet run on, How could *Paul* say and think thus of himself, that he was the *chief* of Sinners? When he spake this, he was a *Justified* person, having his sins pardoned, and forgiven him; and this he was assured of. Besides, as he was *Justified*, so he was *sanctified*: How then could he say, that he was the chief of sinners? *Of whom I am chief.*

A. To this it is Answered; *Paul* here speaks not of what he now was, but of what he had been: Not of what he now was by *Grace*, but what by *Nature*, and what by *Praëise*, before such time as the Grace of God met with him. True it was, there was now a great and wonderful change wrought in him; he was not now the same man that sometime he was. *Now I live*, (saith he) *yet no more I*, *Gal. 2. 20.* No longer that *Saul* which heretofore he was, but much changed, and altered! So was that other *Saul* (King *Saul*) of whom we read, how that the *Spirit of God* coming upon him, (the spirit of Prophecy) he was turned to another man, (as *Samuel* tells him

him it should be done to him, 1 *Sam.* 10. 6.) And so was this *Saul* much more, whose name was altered from *Saul* to *Paul*; giving him, and others, to take notice, that he was now *turned to another man*, wonderfully changed from what he was. Such a change there was in him, in respect of his quality and condition. He who was a *finner*, a great finner, was now a *Saint*. He who was a *Persecuter*, was now a *Preacher*, an *Apostle*. But this was the work of Grace in him. So himself looked upon it; *By the grace of God I am that I am*, (saith he) 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. That he was Called, Justified, Sanctified, that he was a Preacher, an Apostle, this he ascribeth all to Free Grace; not to any thing in himself, nor to any thing that he had done. Of himself he was a finner, a great finner: and such he should still have continued, had not the Grace of God met with him, & wrought such a change in him. So that here, reflecting upon his former condition, looking upon himself as he was before his Conversion, he maketh this free and ingenuous confession and acknowledgement, That he was a great Sinner, I, the *chief of Sinners*.

Q. Why, but yet how could he say this of himself, that he was *then* the chief of sinners? Look upon him before his Conversion, and see what we can find in him that should deserve so severe a Censure: What?

Q. *Paul*, before his Conversion was morally righteous.

was *Paul*, (or *Saul*, for that was then his Name) then a Debauched, Scandalous, Prophanes, Impious Person? Not so; his Life and Conversation was not tainted with any foul Vice, or sinful Enormity. No, clean otherwise; his life was then unblameable, nay very strict and regular; He had then a respect to the *Law* of his God; yea, a more than ordinary Respect, being *zealous* for it, a zealous Professour, and a zealous Practiser of it. And that not only for the *Ceremonial* part of it, wherein (as he tells his *Galatians*) he was a great proficient, beyond others of his time: *Ye have heard* (saith he) of my *Conversation in time past, how I profited in the Jews Religion, above many of my equals in my own Nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of my Fathers*, Gal. 1. 14. But also for the *Moral* part, ordering his Life and Conversation according to that Rule, walking regularly, and unblameably. So much he tells his *Philippians*, chap. 3. v. 6. *Touching the Righteousness which is in the Law, blameless*. Such he then was, a man of an innocent and blameless life & Conversation. And not only so, but endued also with many excellent Moral Vertues, as Justice, Temperance, &c. And what? he the chief of sinners? a man so ordered, so tempered, so qualified?

A.
He was then a friend to the *Law*, but an enemy to the *Gospel*.

To this, *Calvin* and some others, return Answer well. He was then indeed a friend

a great friend then to the *Law*, but an enemy to the *Gospel*; standing for the one, but opposing the other; zealous for *Moses*, but as zealous against *Christ*; an Unbeliever, a Persecuter, not imbracing but rejecting this excellent *Doctrine*, which here he speaketh of, the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, the *Doctrine* of Salvation by *Jesus Christ*. He was then, one of those *Antichrists* which St. *John* speaketh of, 1 *John*. 4. 3. & 2. v. 7. Denying *Christ* to be come in the flesh. Not receiving him, not believing on him, but blaspheming him in his *Person*, and persecuting him in his *Members*, in all that professed his Name. So we have it recorded, *Acts* 8. where the Story tells us, how he being then called, *Saul* consented to *Stephen's* death, vers. 1. and how he made havock of the Church, entring into every house, and, haling men and women, committed them to prison. And after, chap. 9. v. 1, 2. breathing out Threatnings and Slaughter, against the *Disciples* of the *Lord*, he went unto the high Priest, and desired of him letters, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to *Jerusalem*. Such was his zeal then against *Christ*, and against the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, and all the true professors of it. And this was the sin which here he chargeth so heavily upon himself, as the chiefest of sins, making him the chief of sinners. This it was that made him think so meanly, so vilely of himself

as he did, to account himself the least of the Apostles, not worthy to be an Apostle, *Because* (saith he) *I persecuted the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 15. 9. And so here to call himself the *chief of sinners*, in as much as he had been (as he declares in the verse next but one before the Text, vers. 13.) a *Blasphemer, a Persecuter, Injurious*. Thus it was. *Nemo acrior inter Persecutores, ergo nemo peior inter peccatores*, (as *Augustine* hath it). Among all the Persecutors of his time, none more fierce, more eager than he; and therefore among all sinners, none greater than he.

August.
de verbis
Apostoli.
Serm. 9.

Obs.
No sin
like ob-
stinate
Infidelity.

His ver-
bis admo-
nemur
quam
grave sit
apud De-
um, &
atrox cri-
men, Infi-
delitas:
praesertim
ubi acce-
dit obsti-
natio &
saviendi
rabies.
Calvin.
Com. in
Text.

So it is, *Among all sins, there is none greater than the sin of Infidelitie*. This is *Calvins* observation, which he from hence taketh up, and not without ground. This is the sin, that bringeth upon a man the greatest guilt, and maketh him one of the greatest sinners, even the sin of *Infidelitie*; specially when it is accompanied with *obstinacie*, and *contumacie*, and *pertinacie* (as *Paul's* sin here was): now there is no sin like this sin, this sin against the Gospel. Sins against the Law may be great sins, some of them greater than other, some crying sins, of a heinous and horrid nature: But none of them like this sin against the Gospel, *Infidelitie*, when it is (as I said) accompanied with obstinacy; when men will not receive Christ, being offered and tendred unto them, but reject him, and will not believe on him. This is

The

The sin. When the comforter shall come (saith our Saviour to his Apostles), he shall reprove the world of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me, Joh. 16. 8, 9. Intimating this to be the sin, the greatest sin that shall lie most heavy upon the world. No sin like this sin. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, (saith he of the Jews, in the Chapter foregoing) Job. 15. 22. Had not Christ come unto them, and made himself known to them, they had had no sin comparatively, not so great sin to answer for, as now they had. This is the condemning sin. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, Joh. 3. 19. Jesus Christ, who was the true Light, being clearly revealed, as he is, under the Gospel, then not receiving, but rejecting of him, This is the condemning sin, laying those that are guilty of it, under the just sentence of Condemnation. He that believeth not, is condemned already, (saith the verse there foregoing, verse 18.). He is so, being layed under the sentence of Condemnation, as for his other sins, Original and Actual, so in special for this, his not believing. No sin like obstinate Infidelitie; when men shall shut their eyes against the Light, will not receive Christ, and the Doctrine of Salvation by him, but oppose it, and according to their power persecute it. This was Pauls

sin, and it was such a sin as weighed down all his legal Righteousness, making him, in his own estimation and account, the worst, the vilest, the greatest, the *chief of Sinners*.

Applic.

Persons
in some
degree
guilty of
this sin.

Which let it be taken notice of, and seriously considered; and that, As by all of us, that we may be convinced of the greatness of this sin, this sin of *Infidelity*, whereof there is none of us, but in some degree or other stand guilty: So in special,

I.
Meer ci-
vil Per-
sons, rest-
ing in
their
moral
righte-
ousness.

I. By meer civil *Persons*, who look after nothing but the *Righteousness of the Law*. So they may but approve themselves legally, and morally righteous as to the world, they regard not that *Evangelical Righteousness*, whereby they may come to stand righteous before God: So long as they do but yield an outward obedience to the *Law*, they regard not the obedience of *Faith*. Whilst they are just, and sober, and temperate, and chaste, innocent, and harmless in their lives, they think that shall please for them, that shall justify them. So did that *Young man* in the Gospel, who, when our Saviour had repeated to him the duties of the second Table, *Thou shalt do no Murder, Thou shalt not commit Adultery, &c.* He presently replyeth, *All these things have I kept from my youth up*, Mat. 19. 20. Having yielded an external obedience to what the Law required, he thought this was sufficient for his Justification and Salvation. And so do many others.

others. But alas! herein how far are they deceived? All this may a man do, and yet for all that, be among the *chiefest of Sinners*. An instance whereof we have in the Text. *Paul* was (as you have heard) an exact Walker, a strict observer of the Law, blameless in his Life and Conversation; and yet for all that the *chief of sinners*.

Which, I beseech you, to take notice of, who build your hopes of Salvation upon the sandy foundation of your own Righteousness, your good Doings, your good Meanings; you are not as other men, (as that *Pharisee* in the Temple said of himself, thanking God for it, *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, &c.* Luke 18. 11.) you are not tainted and polluted with the crying sins of the Times; you are no Drunkards, no Swearers, no Unclean or Unrighteous persons; your Lives are Blameless, and your Conversations Harmless; and you do (it may be) some, and many good Duties, as giving of Alms, &c. And therefore you hope it shall go well with you, that God will own, and accept you as righteous. Alas, for all this you may be sinners, and great sinners still: I, and such you are, if you refuse to yield obedience to the command of the Gospel. The Gospel-Commandment is the great Commandment. *This is His Commandment, That we should believe on the Name of his Son, Jesus Christ,*

Christ, 1 John 3. 23. *ἡ ἐντολή*, *The Commandment*, that Commandment which Christians ought to have a respect to in the first place. And Obedience to this Command, is the most acceptable obedience. *Paul* telleth his *Romans*, that he had *received Grace, and Apostleship* (i. e. the gift of being an Apostle) *for the obedience of the Faith*, Rom. 1. 5. that he might be an instrument to bring the *Gentiles* to yield obedience to the doctrine of Faith, the Gospel. Not to yield obedience hereunto, is the greatest disobedience. This is that which he chargeth upon the *Jews*, that they had *not obeyed the Gospel*, Rom. 10. 16. Many of them had obeyed the *Law*, seeking Righteousness by their Conformity thereunto; *They followed after the Law of Righteousness*, (as he saith of them in the chapter foregoing, ver. 31.) seeking righteousness by their obedience to the Law. But they had not obeyed the *Gospel*. And this he chargeth upon them as the highest Contempt, the greatest Disobedience; that they, *going about to set up, and establish their own Righteousness, did not, would not, submit themselves to the Righteousness of God*, (as he tells them, chap. 10. ver. 3.) that is, to seek Justification in Gods way; that way which he had laid out for them, viz. by receiving Christ, and Believing on him.

And is not this the case of some, and I fear too many among us? (Pardon me if I take

take liberty a little to insist upon this so needfull a point.) All their care is to hear what *Moses* saith unto them, to yeild obedience to the Law; whilst in the mean time they listen not to the Voice of *Christ*, the Voice of the *Gospel*; they regard not the obedience of *Faith*, but trample upon *Christ*, and the doctrine of Salvation by him; not receiving, not embracing it, not laying hold upon it, not seeking Justification and Salvation by it. Now as for all such, let them know that it is not all their legal Righteousness, that shall be able to justify them before *God*. Before men it may, (in which sense *St. James* tells us of a Justification by Works, *Jam. 2.*) but before *God* it cannot, it shall not. Having no other Righteousness but this, they shall still stand as Sinners before him; yea, as great sinners. In this rank (continuing in this their Infidelity) they will be found at that great Day. The wicked servant in the *Gospel*, is said to have his portion appointed him with unbelievers, *Luke 12. 46.* intimating such to be the chief of Sinners. Such they will be found at that great day. No sin will then be more deeply censured than this. Then will it be as easie, nay, more easie, for Pagans and Paines, who never heard of *Christ*, than for unbelieving Christians, who reject *Christ*, and trample this precious pearl of the *Gospel* under their feet. Here is the first
fort

Too many hearkning more to *Moses*, than to *Christ*.

sort whom I would have to take notice of this *Doctrine* ; meer *Civil* persons.

2. And to these, joyn we such *vain-glorious Hypocrites*, as make a shew of Religion, being zealous for the outside, the *Ceremonial* part of it, (as *Paul* was of the *Traditions of his Fathers*.) None more observant of external Formalities than they. In the worship and service of God, Who seemingly more Devout than they ? yet in the mean time, they are no true friends to *Jesus Christ*, having no inward acquaintance with him.

Inde colligere promptum est, quid valeant coram Deo omnes hypocritarum pompa, dum contumaciter Christo resistunt. Calvin. Com. in Text.

3. But what shall we then say to those *Enemies* that are *Enemies* to him ? not only not receiving him into their Hearts, but opposing him ; yea, and according to their power Persecuting him, and his. This was *Pauls* case (as you have heard) whilst he was Zealous for the *Ceremonies of the Law*, he was an imbittered enemy against *Christ*, a *Blasphemer*, a *Persecuter*, speaking evil of the Way of *Christ*, and persecuting all that he found of that Way. And for this, he here censures, and condemns himself to be the *chief of Sinners*. Who ever they are, that in any degree stand guilty in the like kind, let them take it home to themselves ; so as, being convinced of the greatness of this

this

this their sin, they may come to judg themselves for it (as he did), and so by judging and condemning of themselves, they may prevent the Lords Judgment; and obtain Mercy, as he also did.

Thus you see, whereupon it was the Apostle passeth this Censure upon himself, confessing and acknowledging, that he was the *chief of sinners*.

Why, but it may be alledged, that, what *Paul* herein did, he did it ignorantly. So much he himself asserts in the verse next but one before the Text, *vers. 13. I was so and so, But (saith he) I did it ignorantly*; not intending any evil, nor suspecting that what he did was evil; only he was carried on with a blind inconsiderate zeal, thinking that he did God good service in that which he did. So he tells *Agrippa*, *Acts 26.9. I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. And might not this have pleaded an excuse for him?*

A. Not so: *Ignorance*, however in some cases it may extenuate the sin, yet can it not acquit the sinner. Especially, where it is (as it is called) *Ignorantia vincibilis*, a vincible ignorance; when a man hath means whereby he may come to the knowledg of the Truth. Such was *Pauls* ignorance, he might have known that *Jesus Christ* was the true *Messiah*. This he might have learned from

Q.
Paul sinned ignorantly

A.
Ignorance though it may extenuate the sin, yet it doth not acquit the sinner.

from the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, as also from those works which did sufficiently testify of him, the Miracles which were wrought by him, and by his Apostles, for the confirming of that Doctrine which was by him Preached: So as his ignorance of this Truth was in it self culpable and inexcuseable; and consequently, could not excuse this sin of his, in opposing the Truth of God, in Persecuting Christ in his Members, as he did. Notwithstanding this, yet was he in so doing a *sinner*, a great *sinner*, the *chief of sinners*.

Which let it be taken notice of, by such who are ready under such a pretence, to palliate and excuse the like sins in themselves. *Applic.* Sin not to be palliated under pretence of Ignorance. What they did, they did it ignorantly, or they did it out of a good intention, though rashly and unadvisedly, &c. And therefore they think this shall excuse them before God and men. Not so. Before *men*, haply it may, but not so before *God*. For all this, they are sinners still. Ignorance may excuse *à tanto*, but not *à toto*; in part, but not in whole. Sins of ignorance, are sins still. The Apostle tells us, how the *high Priest* under the Law, offered Sacrifices for the errors of the people, Heb. 9.7. *ὕπερ ἀγνομάτων*, *super ignorantius*, (as *Erasmus*, and the vulgar *Latine* render it) for their ignorances, their sense of Ignorance. And therefore let not any think that this plea will hold good at the bar of Gods Justice, if they shall come to be tried there.

there. True it is, it may make them more capable of Pardon, upon their suing it out, (as *Paul* there saith of himself, that he *obtained Mercy*, because he did what he did, *Ignorantly*, v.13.) : but it cannot acquit, and discharge them of the Sin. *Paul* was still a Sinner; I, in his own apprehension, the *chief of Sinners*.

But the Knot is not yet untied, the point Q
not fully cleared. *Paul* was a sinner, a great Were
sinner, let that be granted; yet how was he there
the *chief of sinners*? Were there not others not o-
as great, if not greater than he? What, had thers as
there not been many that had been guilty in great, or
the very same kind before him? having as greater
great a hand in opposing and persecuting of Sinners
Christ, as ever he had? What say we to than Paul
Herod, who sought to murder Christ in his
Cradle, upon which account (to make sure
of him) he *caused all the children in Bethleem,*
and the coasts thereof, from two years old and
under, to be slain, Mat. 2.16? And so to those
others, (probably his Instruments) who are
there said to have *sought the young child's life*,
vers.20. And what say we to the chief *Priests*
and *Scribes*, of whom we read, that *they*
sought how they might kill him, Luk. 22.2?
And what to *Judas*, who (as it there follow-
eth) communed and bargained with them
for a *sum of money*, to betray that his Lord and
Master into their hands; which being in-
gaged in, he sought *opportunitie to do*, v. 4. 6.
and

and afterwards did it? And what say we to *Herod* and *Pilate*, who had a hand in condemning him? And what to the *Jews*, who used him so inhumanely and barbarously as they did, putting a Crown of Thorns upon his head, reviling and spitting upon him, buffeting him, and afterwards Crucifying him? which, however some of them did it ignorantly, (as our Saviour, making the most charitable construction of it, saith of them; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luk. 23. 34.) yet, can it not be so thought of all: Some of them doing what they did out of implacable malice. And what, were not these as great, nay greater sinners than *Paul* was? who did what he did ignorantly. How is it then, that he here chargeth himself so deeply, that he was the chief of sinners?

Ans. 1. To this, I find diverse Answers returned. *Paul's* sin Some (in the first place) look upon *Paul's* more ge- sin as more general, reaching further than neral theirs did. *Judas* his sin in betraying, and than theirs in Condemning and Crucifying of Christ, it was more particular, extending only to his Person; but *Paul's*, reaching to the whole Church. Others (in the second place) conceive that *Paul* might be more zealous, more active and stirring, more fierce than any of them. Besides (thirdly) he *Videtur quod Judas fuit major. Sed quidam dicunt, quod peccatum Pauli generalius fuit, quia contra totam Ecclesiam.* Aquin. in Text.

had

had more light, at least, greater means of knowledg then the most of them. But (as *Aquinas* notes upon it) all these will not resolve the doubt, in asmuch as *Paul's* sin was still a sin of ignorance, but some of theirs of malice.

rate, & multi Judæi persequuntur ex Malitia. Ibid.

Aquinas himself therefore (in the Second place) he would evade it thus. *Paul* here calleth himself the chief of Sinners; that is, (saith he) not of All sinners, but of Saved sinners. Of such it is that he here speaketh. *Christ Jesus* came into the world to save sinners, of whom (of which saved sinners) I am chief. As for *Judas*, and *Herod*, and *Pilate*, and other of the malicious *Jewes*, they had not found the like Mercy that he had done. They were sinners, but damned sinners, not saved by *Christ*. Now of all such (saith he) *Paul* here reckons himself the chief. But neither can this be looked upon as satisfactory; in as much it layeth too great a restraint upon the words of the Text, which must be understood indefinitely, of all sinners. *Christ Jesus* came into the world to save sinners; tending, and offering Salvation unto all. And of all these sinners *Paul* here acknowledgeth himself to be the chief.

More genuinely then (in the Third place) *Paul* was the greatest of sinners in his own apprehension: Being best acquainted with

*Sed hoc
nihil est,
quia Pau-
lus in In-
credulitate,*

*Maximè
inter pec-
catores
salvatos.
Ibid.*

*A. 3.
Paul the
chief of
sinners
in his
own ap-
prehen-
sion.*

his own sins, and most sensible of them: *Peccata mea certius scio, & gravius pondero* (saith *Carthusian* well), He did more certainly know, and more sensibly feel his own sins, than the sins of others.

1.
Being
best ac-
quainted
with
himself.

1. More certainly know them. As for the sins of others, he looked upon them at a distance, a far off, knowing them onely by Hear-say; In the mean time, not knowing all the circumstances accompanying them, which might either aggravate, or extenuate them. But for his *own sins*, these he was well acquainted with, his eyes being fully opened, and having a great measure of Light, which breaking forth into his Soul, he had now a full discovery of them, so as he was powerfully, and thorowly convinced of them: hereby he was made throrowly acquainted, as with the *Streams*, so with the *Fountain*; as with the several Acts of sinne which he had perpetrated, and committed, so with the fountain of corruption from whence they issued: And both these he took notice of in himself, which he could not do in others. As for the outward *acts* of sinne in others, these he might either see, or hear of; but as for the *fountain* of Corruption, that mass and *body of sin* in them, that he could not be privy to. Thus was he better acquainted with himself, than with others; and with his own sins, than theirs: having a more clear, and full sight of the one, than of the other.

other. So he had, whilest (as I said) he beheld the one *near hand*, the other *afar off*. Now things which we behold near hand, we behold them in their full proportion, whereas things seen at a distance, seem much less than they are. As a *Hawk* flying a high pitch, her shape is lessened, being seemingly far less than when she was upon the *Fist*, or *Pearch*. Whereas the *Moon*, though one of the least of *Stars*, yet seemeth far to exceed them in *Magnitude*, because not so remote, but nearer to the *Earth* than they. So was it with *Paul's* sins; they were nearer to his eye, than the sins of others, and therefore seem'd greater to him, than the sins of any other.

Besides, they were set off (as I may say) by the greatness of that *Grace* and *Mercy* which he had tasted of. Contraries, they do mutually illustrate each other, as that common Maxim tells us, *Contraria juxta se posita magis elucescunt*. White and Black being set together, make each other appear the more. And surely *Paul* having obtained *Mercy*, tasted of those exceeding riches of *Grace*, which God had shewn to him in his kindness towards him in *Christ Jesus*, in the Pardoning and Forgiving of his sins, & receiving him into so great Favour; this made his sins to appear unto him so much the more sinful. Even as it is with a *Traytor* having plotted *Treason* against his *Prince*, against his *Person* or *Government*, and being *Convicted* of it; and

The
great-
ness of
Paul's sins
set off
by the
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ness of
Gods
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shown
to him.

condemned for it, if his Prince out of his special Grace shall please, not only to pardon his Crime, but to receive him into Grace and Favour, admitting him to some place of trust and nearness about his Person: certainly, if there be any ingenuitie in such a person, this cannot but make him see the foulness of his Errour, and make the Treason seem more horrid unto him, than ever the Rigour of the Law, if Executed upon him, would have done. Thus was it with this our Apostle. *Paul* had taken up Arms against Christ, and against his Church, shewing himself a *Rebel*, an enemy to his Person and Government, exercising all the Acts of Hostility that he could upon his Subjects, and that for his cause, whom he thus Maligned, that he would even have pulled Him out of his Throne, if his power would have reached unto it. Now, this sin Christ pardoneth unto him, giving him his Pardon under Seal, assuring him of it. And not only so, but he receiveth him, into special Grace and Favour with himself, entertaining him as a Servant, a Servant by Office, admitts him to a place of near attendance, preferring him to the highest Office in his Court, to be an Apostle, a chief Apostle, conferring many great and signal Favours upon him: No wonder then, that he having now a true *spirit* of *Ingenuitie* in him, (such is the Spirit of God) should look upon his
for

former course as most vile, most sinful, and that he should thus deeply charge himself to be the *chief of sinners*. The Story tells us of *Peter*, how, when at his Masters Command, after so long labour in vain, *having* (as he saith) *toyled all the night and taken nothing*; he had again cast in his Net, and thereupon, haled such a wonderful draught of Fishes; hereupon beholding the Power of Christ, who hereby shewed that he had all the Fishes of the Sea at his command; *When he saw it, he fell down at his knees*, (saith the Text) *saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*, Luk. 5. 8. *Peter* was a sinful man before, and he knew himself so to be. But now, beholding the Power and Sovereignty of his Lord and Master, thus wonderfully manifested, this makes him reflect the more upon himself; and so wrought in him, a greater, a deeper apprehension of his own vileness, his own sinfulness. And thus was it with this our Apostle *St. Paul*. Having had greater experience, as of the Power, so of the Grace and Mercy of Christ, than others, in pulling him as a firebrand out of the flames, in working so great a change in him, this maketh him to reflect the more strongly upon his former course, and breeds in him a deeper apprehension of the heinous and horrid nature of his former Practises, causing him to charge himself so home as here he doth, to accuse and condemn himself as the *chief*

of sinners. Thus, he saw his own sinfulness, more than the sinfulness of others, being better acquainted with his own sins, then with the sins of others.

2.
Paul felt
his own
sins.

2. And again, as he saw them, so he felt them. As for the sins of others, he might see them, or hear of them, but he could not feel them. His own he both saw and felt. Seeing the foul and horrid nature of them, he also felt the weight and burden of them, which he did not of others. And this again, made him think his sins greater than the sins of any other. *Cuique gravissimum suum onus*, (saith *Aretius* upon it). Every one thinks his own burden heaviest, which he carries upon his own shoulders; his own Affliction, the sorest and greatest. Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath Afflicted me, (saith the Church) Lam. 1. 12. A man that is pained in the head, or teeth, or eyes, (as à *Lapide* illustrates it) he is ready to say, and think, that there is no pain like his pain. And he giveth this reason for it, Because he knoweth his own pain by sense and experience, and others, only by speculation and report. He heareth of the one, but he feel-eth the other; and so he is most sensible of

*Sicuti qui
gravi
dentium,
capitis,
vel ocu-
lorum do-
lore labo-
rat, dicit
nullum
dolorem
hoc esse majorem, sed suum omnium esse maximum, quia scit: su-
um sentit per experientiam, aliorum vero dolores tantum considerat
per speculationem. C. A. Lap. in Text.*

his

his own. Even thus was it with the blessed Apostle here. He had without question, heard of the sins of others, and he saw them to be great sins; I, but he feeleth his own. He had felt the burden of his former sins, and he still felt the weight of that body of sin, which he yet carried about with him. And this it was that made him thus to think, and thus to speak of himself, as the greatest, the chiefest of sinners.

Behold here then, the true disposition of a gracious Soul, *a Character of a truly penitent sinner*, He is frequent in remembring, forward in acknowledging, and severe in censuring of his own sins. All these we see in this chosen Vessel, this blessed Apostle here in the Text, who having occasion to make mention of sinners, he presently reflects upon himself, calling to remembrance his own sins; and remembring them, he acknowledgeth them; and acknowledging them, he censures them and himself for them, and that most severely; confessing and professing himself to be not only one of that number, a sinner, but one of the chief of them, a great sinner, nay the greatest, the chief of sinners. And the like disposition shall we find in every truly gracious Soul, every true penitent sinner. Having tasted of the Grace of God in the pardon of his sins, and in changing and renewing of him, he is ever after a frequent Remembrancer, an ingenuous Confessor, a severe

Obs.
General
Observation.

vere Censurer of his own Sins. An Observation, which (as you see), is *Tripartite*, made up of three distinct *Branches*; every of which, will yield us some fruit worth the gathering. That I may not grasp too much at once, I shall single them forth one by one, insisting upon each severally, and that, both by way of *Doctrin*e and *Application*. Begin with the first.

1. Branch The penitent sinner, a frequent Remembrancer of his own sins. *A gracious Soul, is a frequent Remembrancer to its self, frequent in reflecting upon it's own sinful wayes and courses. It is the speech of the Church, Isa. 59. 12. Our Transgressions are with us, and as for our iniquities, we know them. And the like may be said of every truly penitent sinner; his Transgressions are with him, and as for his Iniquities, he knows them. Taking special notice of them, he is frequent in remembring of them. So was it with the man after God's own heart, holy David, whom we shall find frequently striking upon this string. His sins were ever and anon in his eye, so as he took notice both of the number and nature, the multitude and magnitude of them. Thence are those passionate complaints of his which we meet with, that his Iniquities were gon over his head, Psal. 38. 4. That they were more than the hairs of his head, Psal. 40. 12. Thus did he keep a remembrance of them, even of such sins as were long before committed.*

mitted. So he did of the sins of his youth, which we find him deprecating, earnestly begging of God, that he would not remember them, *Remember not the sins of my youth*, Psal. 25. 7. thereby shewing, that he himself had not forgotten them, he remembered them. So he did some sins in special, as viz. that foul sin of his in the matter of *Uriah*; that sin was never out of his sight. *My sin* (saith he, speaking of that sin) *is ever before me*, Psal. 51. 3. It was ever in his eye and thought.

I, but it may be said: *David* at this time was in great trouble of mind for that sin. And no wonder then, that he should remember that which he could not forget; that sin of his, lying so heavy upon his Conscience. And as for his condition at that time, when he complained so of his finnes, that they were *gon over his head*, he was then under a great distress, under some soar Affliction, *the Arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in him*, and his Hand pressed him soar, (as he complains, Psal. 38. 2.) And so was it with the Church in the place forecited; she was at that time in great calamity and distress, lying under the Judgments of God for her sins, (as she there sets it forth in the verses foregoing, Isa. 59. 9, 10, 11.) Now, no wonder that their sins should be brought to their remembrance at such a time. *Josephs* brethren having been for three dayes in ward, then they

Obj.
Not only
in time
of di-
stress.

they remembered the evill that they had done to their brother, *Gen.* 42. 21. And no wonder if the *Church*, lying under so great Calamity; and *David* in so great distress, such affliction of Body and Spirit; should remember and call to mind their sins. What great matter is this? Who would not do it at such a time? *In their Affliction, they will seek me early*, (saith the Lord of *Rebellious Ephraim* and *Judah*, the people of *Israel*) *Hos.* 5. verse last.

A.
But in
the most
quiet
condi-
on.

To go further then; God's Saints have been frequent in remembring their sins, not only whilest God hath set them before them, and made them to possess them, (as *Job* speaketh of himself, *Job* 13. 26. *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*, that is, Thou bringest them to my remembrance, by dealing so severely with me. Not only at such times, when *their iniquities have took hold of them*, so as they have *not been able to look up under them*, (as *David* there saith of himself, *Psal.* 40. 12.) But when all things have gone well with them, after such time as they have sued out the pardon of their sins, have been assured of their Reconciliation with God, and so have injoyed a quiet and comfortable condition in all respects: Yet, even then, they have been much in reflecting upon their sins, in calling them to mind upon all occasions. For an instance hereof, we shall need

need no other then this our Apostle. *Paul*, upon his Conversion, he had all his sins pardoned, and that Pardon sealed up in his Soul, so as he was fully assured, that all the wrong that he had done unto Christ and to his Church, it was now forgotten in Heaven, and should never be charged upon him. His Cognizance hereof, he expresseth in the verse next but one before the Text, *Vers. 13. I was so and so, (saith he) but I obtained mercy, (which he repeats again in the Verse after the Text, Vers. 16.)* that is, to have these, and all other my sins pardoned and forgiven to me. This was *Paul* now assured of, that God had blotted out all these sins of his, out of the Book of his Remembrance, so as they should never be charged upon him. Yet for all this, he himself cannot forget them. Upon all occasions he reflects upon them, and takes occasion to speak of them. So we may see it in those obvious Texts, *Act. 22. 4. chap. 26. 10. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Ephes. 3. 8.* and so here again in this Chapter, as in the 13. verse, so again in this Text, where the mentioning of sinners, causeth him to reflect upon himself, to remember and consider, what a one he was before his Conversion. And thus fareth it with truly penitent sinners, how ever God upon their Repentance, blots their sins out of his own Book, and casts them behind His back, remembering them no more

(as

(as he promiseth, *Isa. 43. 25.*) yet doth he not blot them out of their book, the book of their Remembrance, nor cause them to cast them behind their backs. Still They remember them, and cannot forget them.

Obj. True, (you may say) where the sins have been foul, gross, and scandalous sins, heinous and horrid sins; no wonder now if they stick by a man, and be often brought to his remembrance. Such were *Dauids* sins in the matter of *Uriah*, *Adultery* and *Murder*. And such were *Pauls* sins in blaspheming of Christ and persecuting his Saints, crying-Sins. No wonder if such sins as these did stick by them, & were ever before them. But this is not the case of all. Some and many there are, who do not stand guilty of any such sins, their lives have been more innocent and blameless, they have been kept from such foul & gross evils. What? are they also to have such a frequent remembrance of their sins?

A. Surely, Yes. There being (in the 1st. place) Few but few or none but at some time or other, have have fallen into fallen into some in a special manner, to remember all their such sins. dayes. However, (2dly) they have a *body of sin* in them, which they carry about with them, a mass of corruption, strongly enclining them to evil, which is continually ready to break forth, if it were not by a supernatural power restrained. Besides, (3dly) they have

have many secret *inordinate lusts*, which, though they do not break forth into the outward act, yet oft times they have inward workings in the Soul. Now these require a frequent reflecting upon, to be often had in remembrance. So they have been by the Saints of God. *John the Baptist*, was an holy man, sanctified in his Infancy, as the Angel tells his Father *Zacharias* of him, *Luk. 1. 15.* *He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mothers womb; Sanctified (as Jeremie is said to have been, Jer. 1. 5.) before he came forth of the womb.* A Saint from his birth. And such, questionless, he was in his life, holy and blameless, free from grosser evils, yet was not he unmindful of the corruption of his nature, and the errors of his life. So much may be collected from that speech of his, to our Saviour, who tending himself to his *Baptism*, *John* tells him, *I have need to be baptised of thee*, *Mat. 3. 14.* *Ἐγὼ χρείαν ἔχω, Ego necesse habeo*, (as *Beza* translates it), it is not only expedient, but necessary for me, that I should be baptised of thee. And why so? why, that by Him he might be washen from all sins, Original and Actual, which he had then in remembrance.

But I shall not need to seek for any other instance than this in the Text. This blessed Apostle, he was much exercised and taken up, not onely with the Remembrance of these

All these
Paul re-
mem-
bred.

these grosser Sins committed before his Conversion, but even with the Sight and Sense of his present Corruption, and daily Failings. So much we may learn from his own mouth : as elsewhere, so especially in that Seventh of the *Romans* ; where (not personating any other, but speaking of himself) we find him passionately bewailing, and bemoaning his condition ; not in regard of the Evils of his former course, but of his daily Infirmities, his sinful *Omissions* and *Commissions*, ver. 15. *What I would, that I do not ; but what I hate, that I do :* ver. 19. *The good that I would, that I do not ; but the evil which I would not, that I do.* And so out of the strength of *Corruption* working in him, and sometimes prevailing against him. *I finde* (saith he) *a Law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me,* ver. 21. *I see a Law in my Members, rebelling against the Law of my Mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of Sin, which is in my Members.* Thus was this precious Saint much taken up, not onely with reflecting upon his former sinnes before Conversion, but with considering his present condition. In the sense and apprehension whereof, he there breaks forth into that passionate complaint, Ver. 24. *O wretched man that I am, Who shall deliver me from the body of this Death ? And so here in the Text, Jesus Christ came into the world to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.* Not onely was, but

but *am*, a Sinner, a great sinner still. Thus were his sins ever before him; sins before Conversion, and sins after Conversion. And so is it in measure with every Gracious soul, being truly Penitent for sin; it cannot forget it, it is frequent in the Remembrance of it.

And it cannot be otherwise, the Eyes of *Reas. 1.* such a one being (in the First place) *through-* The Pen-
ly opened. The man whose eyes are open (saith nitent
Balaam of himself) Numb. 24.3. Meaning sinner
 either his Bodily eyes, which being closed hath his
 whilst he was in a Trance, were now opened; Eyes o-
 pened. or rather the eyes of his Mind, which were
 now opened, to behold, and fore-see those fu-
 ture events, which before were hid from him,
 and others. It may be applied to every true
 Convert; Every such a one is *a man whose*
eyes were shut, but now they are open: the
 eyes of his Understanding being opened, to
 see the true Nature of Sin, and to see it
 in himself; to see the finfulness of his Na-
 ture, and of his Life.

2. And his Understanding being thus En- 2.
 lightened, his *Conscience is withal Awakned*, so as His Con-
 That doth the Office, for which it was placed science
 in the Soul, being as a faithful Register, record- awake-
 ing and remembring the several Acts of sin. ned.

3. And again, (Thirdly) the True Pen- 3.
 nitent sinner hath been *pricked at his heart*: His Heart
 As is said of those new Converts, Acts 2. 37. Pricked.
Κατεύχοντο, They were pricked in their
Hearts;

Hearts; deeply affected with the Sense of those Sins, whereof they were by *Peter's* Sermon convinced. And so in measure are all true Penitent Sinners. Being convinced of their Sins, they are in like manner affected with grief and sorrow of Heart for them. Now that which goeth near a mans Heart, maketh a deep and firm impression upon the Memory, so as it cannot easily be forgotten.

These, and many other Reasons might be given, Why a Regenerate person should be so mindful of his *own* sins: and that more than the sins of *others*. The finnes of others, however they both may, and ought to affect a Christian, upon the seeing, or hearing of them; yet they come not so near the Heart, they make not so deep an Impression upon the Soul, as a mans own Sinnes do.

Thus have I done with the *Doctrinal* part of this first *Branch*: Which now, bring we home to our selves, by way of *Application*. Let that be directed onely two Wayes;

By way of { *Conviction,*
Exhortation.

Use 1. 1st. By way of *Conviction*. Is this the *Disposition* of a truly Gracious Soul, a true Penitent, divers discovered to be no true Penitents.

nitent

nitent sinner? How many then are there, who may from hence be convinced, that they are none of this number, being such, as seldom, or never, reflect upon their own sinfulness; or, if they do, they do it not in a right way and manner. Of these, I shall reckon up four or five several sorts.

1. Some there are, and many, whose *Con-*
sciences were never yet awakened, their eyes ^{Such}
 were never yet opened to see their own sin- ^{whose}
 fulness, the sinfulness of their natures, and ^{Conscien-}
 errors of their lives. Such a *dead sleep* hath ^{ces were}
 seized upon them, that nothing will awaken ^{never a-}
 them. Notwithstanding that their *sins*, be- ^{wakened}
 ing (it may be) crying sins, cry loud in their
 ears; yet they hear them not. Notwith-
 standing that the *Judgments* of God against
 those sins, and against them for them, have
 been by his Ministers thundered out in their
 ears, enough to shake and rend the most
 rocky heart; yet they stir not them. Not-
 withstanding, that their sins have taken hold
 upon them, and broke forth upon them in
 many terrible and remarkable Judgments,
 pointing out their sins unto them; yet they
 affect them not. Still they go on in their
 way, being stupid and senseless, never brought
 to consider the state and condition they are
 in; never brought to fix a serious thought
 upon any of their sins, though never so foul,
 never so open and scandalous. Others see
 them, the world cryeth shame on them, yet
 G them-

themselves are not at all touched with the sense of them. Such a *dead sleep* (as I called it) is fallen upon them. And well may it so be called. When a man cannot be awakened by hallowing in his ears, by pricking, and pinching, and smiting of him, we conclude he is in a desperate *Lethargie*, a dead sleep. And is not this the case of many stupid Souls among us? *Word, Threatnings, Judgments*; Word Pronounced, Threatnings Denounced, Judgments Executed; yet all stir not them. Still they lie in sin, go on in sin without sense, without remorse, never reflecting upon themselves, upon their hearts or lives, to consider the evil of them. This is that which the Lord complaineth of in the people of *Hierusalem*, Jer. 8. 6. *I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright, no man repented him of his wickedness, Saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the Battle.* Such was their general securitie and stupiditie! none of them had any remorse, or touch at all in their Consciences for any of their sins, so far forth, as but to think once seriously with themselves, What it was that they had done; But like a fierce headstrong horse, which hearing the sound of the Trumpet, and seeing or smelling the Battle a far off, doth with much violence, notwithstanding what his Rider can do to hold him in, in a full Carrier make towards it, and rusheth into the midst of it,

it. Such was the eagerness of that people to the pursuit of their sinful wayes and courses. And so is it with too many every where: Whatever can be said or done to them, yet still they will hold on their course, nothing can bring them to a serious consideration of the evil thereof. So far are they from that tenderness of Conscience, which was in this our blessed Apostle, and is to be found in measure in every regenerate person, (who having *tender hearts* (as *Josiah* is said to have, *2 Chron.* 34. 27.) the least hint is enough to bring their sins to remembrance) that nothing will stir, nothing will awaken them. Certainly a fearful state, a desperate condition, a clear evidence, that they are (as the Apostle saith of his *Ephesians* before their conversion, *Ephes* 2. 1.) *dead in trespasses and sins!*

2. A Second sort there are, who have^{2.} been, and it may be are, in measure awake-^{Such as} seek to
 ned, but they labour what they can, to *lull* lull their
themselves a sleep again. God hath, it may be, ^{Consci:}
 at some time, upon some occasion, be-^{ences at}
 gun to bring their sins to their remembrance ^{sleep}
 and to set them before them. Happily, ^{again.} upon
 the hearing of some powerful Sermon,
 upon the feeling or fearing of some terrible
 Judgment, their consciences have begun to
 be awakened, and thereupon their sins have
 begun to stare them in the face. They have
 been in measure convinced of the evil of
 G 2 their

their former wayes, and have felt some horror of conscience for them. But hereupon what do they? why presently do what they can to get their consciences a sleep again; take all the courses they can to charm their sins, to silence and stay the clamour of them, or to stop their ears against them, that so they may never hear more of them. To this end they even study the Art of *Oblivion* and Forgetfulness.

1. *Shunning* that might disquiet their consciences, by all means bringing their sins to their remembrance. that might awaken them. Upon that account declining, as much as they can, a searching, and a *Powerful Ministry*. A thing, which they can by no means endure. *What have I to do with thee, thou man of God? Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance?* It is the speech of the *Widow of Sarepta*, speaking in a passion to the Prophet *Elijah*, 1 King. 17. 18. So it is: the Prophets of God, his *Ministers* powerfully dispensing the Word, denouncing the Judgment of God, they bring the sins of wicked men to their remembrance, and therefore they cannot away with them. This it was, that made *Ahab* to decline *Micaiah's* Ministry and to hate his person; because (as he himself giveth the reason of it), he *did not prophesie good concerning him, but evil*, 1 King. 22. 8. He would not flatter, and smooth him up in his sins, (as the rest of his false Prophets did) but

but dealt plainly with him, being to him a *faithful Remembrancer*, to put him in mind of them. And this it was, that made *Felix* so weary of hearing *Paul's* Sermon, *Act. 24. 25.* *Paul* preaching to him of *Righteousness, and Temperance, and Judgement*, (a subject which he liked not to hear of, being conscious to himself of his own flagitious and wicked Life) put him into a *trembling fit*, his Conscience beginning to be awakened; which he could by no means endure. And is not this the case of some, and too many amongst us? Being desirous to lull their Consciences asleep, and to go on in their sinful ways & courses without disquietment, they thereupon baulk, and, as much as may be, decline the powerful Ministry of the Word; at least, not enduring that their *darling sins* should be meddled with. *I charge you, O ye daughters of Hierusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my Love till he please*, (saith the Spouse concerning her *Well-beloved*) *Cant. 2. 7.* And the like charge could some be content to give to the *Lords Watchmen*, the Ministers of Christ, That they should not stir, or disquiet their Beloved Lusts; which if they do, they cannot bear, they cannot endure it at their hands. *Herod* could be content to hear *John the Baptist*, and in many things he heard him gladly, (as it is said of him, *Mark 6. 20.*) but when he cometh to meddle with his *Herodias*, telling

him (as he did, *ver. 18.*) That it *was not lawful for him to have his brother's Wife*; now this must not be endured, *John* must presently to the Prison, and at *Herodias* his request have his Head cut off, (as the Story there sets it forth). Such is the Genius of too many every where (I wish there may be none of them found among you), they purposely decline all wayes and means, which might bring their sins to their remembrance.

2.
Using
means to
put their
sins out
of their
remem-
brance.

2. And on the other Hand, they make use of all kind of *Opiates*; use all the means they can devise, or think of; to put and keep their Sins out of their Remembrance. To that end, either with *Cain*, falling to *building of Cities*, *Gen. 4. 17.* they plunge themselves into all kind of Worldly employments; or with *Solomon's fool*, running into the *house of Mirth*, *Eccles. 7. 4.* betake themselves to merry Jovial company, give themselves up to the following of Vain Sports and Recreations; seeking, by this means, to drive away the Evil spirit of an awakened Conscience, and to drown the noise and clamour of their Sins; even as those *Idolaters* are said to have done the cries of their Children, which they Sacrificed in the Vallie of *Hinnom*, with the noise of Drums, or other Instruments, (from whence it had the name of *Topheth*, coming from the Hebrew word *Toph*, which signifieth *Tympanum*, a *Tymbrel*, or *Drum*). Now these are far from

Pauls

Pauls disposition here in the Text, who was willing to take all occasions to put him in minde of his Sins.

A Third sort there are, who have attained what the former desired, and endeavour-^{3.} Such as having been a- awakened are fallen asleep a- gain. ed ; having been awakened, they are *fallen asleep again*. Time was, when their Consciences were Pricked, they were convinced of the Evil of their wayes, which had begun to breed some Repenting and Relenting thoughts in them ; but now they are (as I said) fallen asleep again, having put away the Remembrance of what they had been for a time somewhat affected with ; so as it hath now hapned to them, according to the Proverb, (which St. Peter speaketh of, 2 Pet. 2. last) *The Dog is turned to his own Vomit, and the Sow that was washen, to the wallowing in the Mire*. They are returned to their former Course, so as now they go on again as securely as ever, forgetting the things that are behind. As *Paul* saith of himself in a clean contrary sense, in his doing of Good, *Forgetting those which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press towards the Mark, &c.* Phil. 3. 13. Even so is it with them, in acting and committing of Sin, they forget the sins which are Behind, the sins of Youth, and the sins of Riper age, which, it may be, they have been formerly convinced of ; and they press forwards to the making up of the full measure of their Iniquities.

4.
Such as
remem-
ber their
sins, but
seldom,
and then
against
their
wills.

A Fourth sort there are, who do, it may be, at sometimes remember their sins, but it is *very seldom*, and then *against their wills*. Never but at such times, as when God is pleased to set their Sins before them, making them to possess them, bringing them to their Remembrance, by *Writing bitter things against them*, inflicting upon them some severe Judgement. Now, it may be, they cast some glances upon their Sins, looking upon them as the fewel that have kindled this Fire. Even as that *Widow of Sarepta* did in the Text even now cited, *1 Kings 17. 18*. Her son being Sick, and the Prophet coming to her, now she remembreth her Sin, which she apprehended might have brought that threatned Judgement upon her and hers: *Art thou come unto me (saith she) to call my Sin to Remembrance?* But no sooner is the storm over, but they cast their sins behind their backs again, remembering them no more; in times of Prosperity, never so much as thinking of them. In this, like some bad Debtors, who never think of what they Owe, but when they are under Arrest, or at least see the Sergeant.

5.
Such as
remem-
ber them
but are
not hum-
bled for
them.

To these, yet adde another sort, worse than all the former. They, it may be, do look back, and call their former sins to their remembrance; but how? not remembering them as they ought to do; not looking upon them as *Sins*, to repent of them, and to be

be humbled for them, to shame and condemn themselves for them ; but only (it may be) as *tricks of youth*, (as they call them) and so making light of them. Nay, it may be, remembring of them to *Boast of them*, to Glory in them, (as those *Idolaters* are said to do of their *Idols*, *Psal.* 97. 7.) or pleasing, and tickling themselves (as it were) with the thought and remembrance of those sins, which now they want opportunity, or ability, to act over again. Of all the rest, these are the worst.

Now to speak a word or two to all of these, A word to awaken secure sinners. in special to those *secure sinners*, such as go on in a course of Sin, never reflecting upon themselves, and such as are so far from this frequent Remembrance, that they (as I said) *study the Art of forgetfulness*, accounting it their happiness to forget their Sins; and consequently cannot endure to be put in minde of them : Let all such but seriously consider these two things, which will serve to convince them of the folly and madness of this their Course.

1. That *all their sins are Registred*, and put upon Record. So they are, and that both in *Heaven*, and upon *Earth*. In *Heaven* in *Gods Book*, the book of his Remembrance. Upon *Earth*, in their *own Book*, the book of *Conscience*. In both these *Books*, are their sinnes entred and recorded : And that so as, whilest they hold on this course, they

1. Their sins are registred in two Books.

they cannot be Blotted out, they cannot be Forgotten.

I. In Gods Book: As David saith of the members of his Natural body, *In thy Book are all my members written*, Psal. 139. 16. so may a Wicked man say of his sins, The members of that *body of Sin* in him, they are all written in Gods Book, the book of his Remembrance. There are the *Names* of all Gods *Saints* entered, as the Prophet *Malachy* tell us, *Mal. 3. 16. A book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.* And there are the *Names* of all wicked & ungodly men entred: And, as their *Names*, so their *Sinnes*. Every particular Act, with every particular Circumstance, being all come up into Remembrance before God. So the *Angel* tells *Cornelius* concerning his *Good works*; his works, of Piety and Charity, his Prayers and Almes: *Thy Prayers and thine Almes* (saith he) *are come up for a memorial before God*, Acts 10. 4. And so may it be said of the *Wicked works* of every wicked and ungodly man; his Swearing, his Drunkenness, his Uncleanness, &c. they are all come in Remembrance before God, all Entred into his *Book*; and that so as they cannot, by any means, be *blotted out*, (save onely by the Blood of Christ, and the Tears of true Repentance) nor yet *worn out*: This being a *Record* for
Eternity.

Eternitie. God's Remembrance, is an *everlasting Remembrance*. In this remembrance are the Righteous; *The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance*, Psal. 112. 6. Men may forget them, but so will not God. And in such a remembrance shall all wicked men and their wicked works be; they shall be had in everlasting remembrance. So they shall be with God: however they themselves may forget their own sins, and the world may forget them; yet God, whilst his Justice is not satisfied, He will not, He cannot. What a folly then is it in them, to go about to forget them, so long as God remembers them? Were it so, that they could blot them out of their own *Book*, the book of their *Conscience*; yet as long as they stand upon Record in *God's Book*, what will this avail them? What will it advantage a *Debtor* to cross his own book, so long as his Debts stand charged in his *Creditor's*.

2. But (in the 2d. place) the sins of wicked men, as they are entered in *God's Book*, In their
 so in *theirs*. As in the book of his *Remem-* own
brance, so in the book of their *Conscience*. book, the
 In this book (I say) they are *entered*; I, and Consci-
 so entered, as that they cannot *blot* them ence.
 out. *Blur* them they may, but *blot* them out they cannot. *Conscience is a Record for Eternitie*. What is written there, is written with indelible Characters, such as none but God alone can blot out. Thence it is that *David*
 ma-

makerh his prayer to God, that he would blot out his *Transgressions*, Psal. 51. 1. This David himself could not do; as, not out of God's Book, so not out of his own, not out of the book of his *Conscience*. No, do what he could, still *his sin was before him* (as he complains, *vers.* 3.). All that men can do in this case, is but to keep this book shut, (which for a time haply they may); but to blot out what is written in it, this they cannot do. They may do this, for a time, out of their *memorie*; but not out of their *Conscience*. What is written in the *Memorie*, is written oft-times in *Water*; but what is written in *Conscience*, is written in *Marble*. Thus are the sins of wicked men, entered and Recorded in these two Books, whereof, the one is a true *Counterpane* of the other.

2. And being thus entered here, these Books (in the 2d. place) shall one day be opened. However, for a time, they may be shut and closed up, so as men do not take notice of what is written in them; yet, they shall not ever be so. A time will come, when they shall be both opened.

1. Gods Book.

1. *God's Book* shall be opened. However for a time he may keep silence, seeming to connive at wicked and ungodly men, as if he took no notice of their sins, or had forgotten them; yet, sooner or later, he will open his Book, and make them to read what is written there, setting their sins in order be-

before them. This, the Lord willeth every presumptuous sinner to take notice of, *Psal.* 50. 21. *These things hast thou done, (saith he) and I kept silence; thou thoughtest, I was altogether such a one as thy self, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes, Psal.* 50. 21. This will God do, sooner or later. He will open his *Book*, and, opening it, he will also open the eyes of all wicked and ungodly men, so as they shall not but read what is there written. They shall not then be able any longer, to avoid the looking and thinking of their sins, no more than King *Balthazzer* could the beholding of the *hand writing upon the wall*, *Dan.* 5. 5.

2. I, and their own *Book* shall be opened, 2. The book of *Conscience*. That may be shut and sealed up for a time, but it shall be opened sooner or later. *Conscience*, though a sleep for a time, it shall be awakened. And then it shall do it's office, bringing the most secret sins of wicked men, to their remembrance; setting their sins before them, so, as either to drive them to God by Repentance, (as it did *David*), or to the Devil by Desperation, (as it did *Cain* and *Judas*). What a bootless thing is it then, for men to study the *Art of forgetfulness*? to decline the remembrance of their own sins, when as they are so entred into both these *Books*, which shall one day be thus *Opened*?

2. But

Q. But *when, when?* saith the prophane Wretch, when shall this be?
 A. Why, either sooner or later: soon enough, and too soon, to the cost of all secure sinners.

1. It may be *in this life*. Haply in time of Health and Prosperity, in the mid'st of their greatest jollity, when they least think of it. So was it with *Belshazzar*, when he was carrowzing in the mid'st of his cups, and least dreamed of any such matter, then did the *hand-Writing* appear to him. And thus God can come unto men, and sometimes doth, in the midst of their outward prosperitie, then awakening their Consciences, then representing their sins unto them.

2. In time of Affliction, at the hour of Death. 2. But if not then, yet in time of *Affliction*, in time of *Sickness*, at the hour of *Death*, when the Judgments of God have seized upon them, and Death, his Sergeant, hath laid hold upon them, they being then under Arrest, ready to be carried to the Prison of Hell, to be brought before the Tribunal of Jesus Christ, there to give an accompt of what they have done in the flesh; then doth God often open the Book of Conscience, and make men to see those Sins, which before they had shut their eyes against, setting them before them in the most hideous shapes, calling to remembrance all those sins, which they so long time had studied to forget.

3. But

3. But if not so, if the Book of Conscience be not opened in this life, but men carry it closed and sealed out of the world with them, (as oft-times it falleth out), yet both that and the other Book, *God's Book*, shall certainly be opened hereafter; viz. at the Day of Judgment. At the day of Particular, more fully at the day of the General Judgment. Then shall *these Books be opened*. This St. John tells us he saw in a Vision, Rev. 20. 12. *I saw (saith he) the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the Books were opened*. And what books were these? why, even both these Books which I have spoken of, *God's Book*, and *Man's Book*; the Book of God's Remembrance, and man's Conscience: Both shall be opened at that great Day. And then shall all the sins, that wicked and ungodly men have done, be brought to their remembrance. Those sins, which here they cast behind their backs, shall then be set before their faces. Those sins, which here they study to forget, they shall then remember them. Those sins, which here they turned away their eyes from, they shall then behold them, yea, and that with open face. That which the Apostle saith of true Believers, and of that clear Vision, which they shall one day have, of Divine and Heavenly Mysteries, viz. at the last and great day, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; with open face,*
be-

beholding things as they are, it may be said of all wicked and ungodly men, and of their sins. Now they behold them through a glass, and that a false glass, and they see them darkly; *Conniventibus oculis*, winking at them, not willing to behold them in their true colours as they are, to have a true sight and sense of them. But they shall, at that day, *that day of Wrath, and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God* (as the Apostle calleth it, *Rom. 2. 5.*) thus behold them with open face, having a full sight of them. Then shall all their sins be set before them, and so set before them, as that they shall for ever stare in their faces, being unto them, a matter of horreur and terrour to all Eternitie. O consider this, all you who are now so loath to look upon your sins, to look upon them as truly penitent sinners do, but account it your happiness to forget them. Be you convinced of the greatness of your folly herein, and withall of the wretchedness of your state and condition, being hereby sufficiently discovered. This, by way of *Conviction*.

Use 2. In the 2d. place, by way of *Exhortation*, let all be excited herein, to propound this *Exhor.* our *Apostle*, as a *Pattern* for their Imitation; tation, exciting remembring their own sins, as he did his. Which, (that it may take place the better) to the remembrance of let it be directed to two sorts of persons; Sinne. *Such as never yet knew, what it was to remember*

ber their sins aright ; and such as have remem- Directed
bred them, and repented of them. Begin with to two
the former. sorts of
Persons.

I. *Secure and impenitent sinners*, such, whose Consciences were never yet thoroughly awakened, let them be excited to reflect upon themselves; upon their former sinful wayes and courses, to call their sins to remembrance. Which I beseech you lend an ear unto, all you who are of this number; of which, I fear there are too many every where.

I.
Secure
Sinners.

To excite you whereunto, do but consider that this is the next, nay, the only way, to have your sins forgotten. For you to remember them, is the only way to have God to forget them. If you forget them, he doth, and will remember them. If you remember them, he will forget them.

Motive 1.
This is
the only
way to
have sins
forgotten,

Only, see that you remember them in a right way, seriously, with sorrow and shame. This is the right remembrance of sin, when men remember their sinful wayes, and are ashamed of them. This is that which the Lord saith, his people, the people of the Jews should do, Ezek. 16. 6. when he should make good his Covenant to them, and establish it with them, viz. upon their Conversion, Then (saith he) thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, Vers. 61. Remember, and be confounded (as the last verse there hath it). Thus doth the truly penitent sinner remem-

Caution 1
See that
it be a
right
remem-
brance.

ber his sins, he remembers them, and is ashamed of them, self-confounded for them, loathing, and abhorring them, and himself for them. So the Lord saith, that his people Israel should do, when he should *bring them again into their own Land*, restoring them from their Captivity, *Then* (saith he) *ye shall remember your wayes, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loath your selves in your own sight, for all the evils which ye have committed,* cap. 20. of that Prophecie, *vers. 43.* Repeated again, *cap. 36. vers. 31.* And thus, see that you remember your sins. Looking back upon them, not as *Lot's Wife* did upon her *Sodom*, which she may be conceived to have left against her will, sorrowing, that she and it were parted, and that she might not return to it again; for which cause she was turned into a *Pillar of Salt*, made a Monument to all posterity, (as the Story tells us) *Gen. 19.26.* Thus do *aged sinners*, sometimes look back upon their sins, their sins of youth, which they have left, (or rather, which have left them) not being ashamed of them, or sorrowing for them, but pleasing themselves in the remembrance of them, sorrowing rather that they have been forced to part with them. Thus do they remember their *sins*, as they do their *friends* being dead, mourning over their Graves, lamenting their death, sorry that they could live no longer with

with them. Now, as for such a *Remembrance*, far be it from every of you. Would you have God to forget your sins, see that you remember them with sorrow and shame; loathing and abhorring them, and your selves for them. So look upon them, as a *sick Patient* doth upon his *Vomit*, which his stomach being disburdened of, the very sight or smell of it, is loathsome to him. Remembring them, be ashamed of them, and confounded in your selves for them.

Taking notice (which let it serve for a *Motive 2.* second *Motive*), that this is the onely way to *The only way to prevent everlasting Confusion* at the last and great Day. Those that will not remember their sins here, shall remember them there; those that will not remember them with shame here, shall behold them with shame there; those that will not be confounded for them here, shall be confounded for them at that day, *They shall then be ashamed, and also confounded all of them; they shall go to confusion*, (as the Prophet saith of the *makers of Idols*, Isa. 45. 16.) O then! Be awakened, and stir up your selves to such a serious remembrance of your sins.

And this do you *speedily*. Not deferring *Caution 2.* the remembring of them, as too many do; This to be done *speedily*. who, as long as health and strength are continued to them, they go on securely, not willing to trouble themselves with the thought of their sins. No, when the *evil* day

day cometh, then it will be soon enough to do this; In time of sickness, at the hour of death, this is the time which they have designed to this work. A time of all other, most improper for it. So, many a one hath found it, and so let them make account to do, who ever they are, who shall put off the remembrance of their sins till then. Haply, at that time (1st.) thou mayest want *power* to do this, not having the use of *memorie*. Or (2dly.) having power, thou mayest want a *will*; though thou hast a *head*, thou mayest want a *heart*: God often (yea, for the most part) denying his Grace at that time, to those that have slighted the former offers of it. But (3dly.) though thou hast both *power* and *will*, yet, how sad and terrible will the remembrance of thy sins be then unto thee, when thou shalt come to look death in the face, and be under the Arrest of that grim *Sergeant*, thy *body*, ready to be carried to the prison of the *Grave*, and thy *Soul* (without infinite Mercy) to the prison of *Hell*; there to make satisfaction for those sins which thou hast committed, but not repented of? O sad remembrance of sin! when, being thus arrested, and called to give up thy accompt, thou shalt remember thy *sins*, but canst not remember thy *repentance*; canst remember thy *Debts*, but cannot shew thy *Acquittance*; shalt remember how thou hast provoked God by a continual course of sin, and so made thy self

self justly obnoxious to his everlasting Wrath and Vengeance, but canst not remember that ever thou suedst out thy pardon; this will be a sad Remembrance. To prevent the horror and terror hereof then, Remember your sins now. Now, whilest health and strength last, now whilest you have time for the suing out your *Pardon*, Now remember them.

Which, that you may do, (for *Direction* *Direct. 1.* briefly) *Begg it of God, that he would open your eyes, that he would in a kindly way, set your sins in order before you, bringing them to your remembrance, causing you to know them.* This is that which *Job* desireth from his God in his *Passion*, *Job 13. 23.* *Lord, (saith he) make me to know my transgression and my sin.* And the like do you, upon serious thoughts, begg it of God, that he would make a full discovery of your sins to you. So it is, unless He be pleased to do this for you, you will never behold them as they are, nor remember them as you ought. And therefore be earnest in begging this Mercy, (A Mercy, which maketh way for all saving Mercies, for pardoning Mercie, healing Mercie,) that the Lord would be pleased, to discover your sins unto you, making you acquainted with your Selves, with the sinfulness of you *Natures, in the Hearts, and Lives.* *Direct. 2.* Wait upon him in the Ministry of his Word.

Which, that he may do, *Wait upon him in the*

the use of such means, as whereby he ordinarily effecteth this work. The chief whereof, is the publick *Ministry of his Word*. Hereby doth God open the eyes of poor sinners. *Paul*, was sent by God unto the *Gentiles* upon this Errand, *To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, &c.* (as the Lord tells him) *Act. 26. 18.* And how was he to do this? Why, by his Preaching, his Preaching of the Word to them. Herein are God's *Ministers* his *Instruments* (as he was) in doing of this work, in giving sight to the blind; in making men to see and know their sins. This is the work which the Lord putteth his Prophet *Ezekiel* upon, *cap. 16. 2.* *Son of man* (saith he) *cause Jerusalem to know her Abominations.* And this is the work of God's *Ministers* his *Interpreters*, (as to shew unto man his uprightness, of which *Elihu* speaks, *Job 33. 23*; so) to convince him of his sinfulness. And therefore, that you may come to see and feel this; attend upon this Ordinance of God, and that with care and Conscience, that you may hear what God will say to you by his Ministers. Not being offended at them, when they come to touch upon your sins, as *Abab* was with *Michaiab*, *Herod* with *John the Baptist*, and *Felix* with *Paul*, (of whom I spake before); but, Be willing to hear of them, that so you may be convinced of them, and brought

(III)

brought to remember them in a truly penitential way. This for the former sort, such as never yet knew, what it was to remember their sins aright.

In the second place, for them who have remembered them, and seriously repented of them, let them also be excited, *frequently to reflect upon them*. It is a mistake, if any shall think (what our *Antinomians* of late time did) that when once a man hath repented of his sins, and sued out his pardon for them, he should then cast them behind his back, so as to remember them no more.

2.
Penitent
sinners
excited
to a fre-
quent re-
mem-
brance
of their
sins.

Our Apostle *St. Paul*, he had repented of his sins committed before his Conversion, his Infidelity, Obstinacy, Blasphemy; his opposing of Christ, and Persecuting of his Saints. Being hereof convinced in an extraordinary way, by a Voice from Heaven; Christ himself calling unto him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Act. 9. 4. he had seriously repented of them. And he had sued out his pardon for them, having it under Seal, being assured that he had obtained Mercy (as here he declares it once and again, in the verse next but one before, and the verse after the Text): Yet, notwithstanding this, upon all occasions (as you have heard), he is ready to reflect upon those sins, and to call to minde his forepast condition. Let it not then content any of us, that we have remembered our sins, that we

have been humbled for them, and that by believing on Christ, we have obtained the pardon of them, but still take all occasions to reflect and look back upon them, to call them to minde again. Specially our *special sins*, which have been of greater magnitude then other. So the Lord tells his people *Israel* they should do, when he was pacified towards them for all the evil that they had done, then, they should remember it, *Ezek. 16. vers. last.*

Two Questions resolved. Why, but it may be said, *To what purpose is this? or, What benefit shall a Christian reap in so doing.* Here are two *Queries*, to which I shall return *Answers* severally. In which *Answers* we shall fall in, with divers *Arguments* and *Motives*, which will be of use, to press and set on the *Exhortation*.

Q. 1. Wherefore a penitent sinner should do this? For the former. *Wherefore should a Christian do this?* Having once repented of his sins, and sued out the pardon of them, Why should he disquiet himself in calling them to mind again, in rubbing over an old soar? I Answer, this a Christian is to do upon diverse accounts, for diverse *Ends*, and *Reasons*: Instance in 4. of them.

A. 1. *For the making sure of his Repentance*, that he may know it to be sound and true. All Repentance is not true Repentance. It is with *sins* as with *wounds*: Wounds may be skinned over, and yet not healed; Sins may be sorrowed for, yea, and abstained from, yet

yet not truly repented of. To this end therefore, a Christian should be frequent in reflecting upon them, to see whether he hath truly repented of them or no. Even as a man, by rubbing and chafing of the soar, he trieth whether it be healed or no; even so by this means, a Christian may come to judg of his Repentance, whether it was sound or no, by calling his sins to his remembrance, - rubbing, and pressing them, (as it were) by a frequent reflecting upon them; which doing willingly, it may be to him an evidence that it is so. A wound that is only skinned over, will not endure the handling; the touching of it, puts the patient to pain. Where men cannot endure to have their sins touched, by themselves or others, to be put in minde of them, it is an evidence those sins are not healed, never truly repented of. Sins healed, will endure the touching. Upon this accompt, Christians ought to be frequent in reflecting upon their sins, for the assuring of the truth of their repentance.

2. And as for the assuring, so (2dly.) for the *renewing and increasing* of it. It is a mistake, if any shall think Repentance to be onely one particular act, the work of an hour, or a day, or the like (as *Papists* look upon their *Penance*). No, it is an habitual work, the work of a Christians life-time, and so to be frequently renewed. A work which a Christian

2.
For the
renewing
and in-
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of it.

stian can never do too much, or yet enough. Certainly, he that thinks he hath repented enough, never yet repented aright. In this sense, the Repentance of a Christian may be called, *Repentance to be repented of*, because not so perfect as it ought to be. Those, who are the greatest proficient, and have made the greatest progress in this work, yet they fail in this as in all other duties, falling short of repenting as they ought to do. And therefore ought to take all occasions for the renewing of their repentance; and to that end, they are frequently to call to mind their former sins, that they may mourn over them afresh, renewing their former sorrow for them.

The Remembrance of sin, though bitter, maketh way for sweet joy.

Which, however it may have some bitterness in it for the present, yet it will make way for great joy and comfort to the Soul. So it is, the joy of a Christian ariseth out of sorrow, sorrow for sin; and ordinarily it is proportioned to it. As it was with *Eliab's Sacrifice*, 1 King. 18. 33. 38. after he had caused water in great abundance, three several times, to be poured about the Altar, then came forth the Fire. Thus, after a Christians sorrow for sin, his joy ariseth. And as the one is increased, so oft-times is the other. The Harvest answereth the Seed time. *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy*, Psal. 126. 5. Never a truly penitential tear, that the remembrance of sin draweth from

from the eye, but ordinarily God answers and recompenceth it with a suitable proportion of joy and comfort to the Soul.

In the 3d. place, Christians are to be frequent in remembring of their sins, that they may get assurance of the pardon of them, that they may get their pardon sealed up unto their Souls. A pardon, is not ever as soon sealed as granted. A Christian may have his sins pardoned in Heaven, yet not so in his own Conscience, wanting the assurance thereof. And upon this accompt, he ought to have his sins frequentlie in his eie. Upon this accompt, among other, he is daily to pray for the forgiveness of them, as our Saviour directeth us to do in that form of prayer which he hath given us, where this is one of the six Petitions, *Forgive us our Trespases*, meaning not onely our daily sins, (as we pray for our daily bread) but all the sins of our lives past, that so we may still gain a further and clearer evidence, and assurance of the pardon of them. This use David made of his sins being ever before him, it put him upon the earnest seeking of the assurance of his pardon, that, that cloud being dispelled, the light of God's countenance might come to shine upon his Soul; which he earnestly sueth for in that Penitential Psalm of his, Psal. 51. *Make me to hear the voice of joy and gladness*, vers. 8. *Restore unto me the joy of thy Salvation*, vers. 12. Thus are Christians to reflect

3.
To get
assurance
of the
pardon
of them.

reflect upon their sins, that they may get the pardon of them Sealed.

4thly, and lastly, Remember them, that they *may get them thorowly healed*; that they may be freed and delivered, as from the *guilt*, so from the *power* of them. A *disease* may be cured, and yet there may be some relicks of it in the bodie; which, if not looked to, may incline it to a Relapse. Thus, a *sin* may be repented of and pardoned, and yet there may be some remainders of it in the Soul, which, if not looked unto, may break forth again. And upon this accompt a Christian is to remember it, that he may get strength against it. Such use also *David* made of his sins being ever before him, it putteth him upon seeking unto God, that he would *thorowly wash him from his iniquity, and cleanse him from his sin*, Psal. 51. 2. freeing him both from the guilt and power of it: And that he would *create in him a clean heart, renewing a right spirit within him*, vers. 10. And, that he would *establishe him with his free Spirit*, vers. 12. Thus are Christians to have a frequent eie upon their sins, as *Patient*s have upon their *soars*, to see that they may not break forth again. To these ends and purposes (among others) are Christians to be frequent in this exercise.

Q. 2.
What benefit redoundeth from this practice.

Which whilst they are, it will be very *beneficial* to them, and that diverse ways. That is the second thing which I propounded to shew

shew you, *What profit, what benefit a Christian shall reap from this practise.* Much every way. Were there no other, than what I have made mention of already, the attaining of that Four-fold end; The knowing of the truth of their Repentance, The renewing and increasing of it, The getting of assurance of the pardon of their Sins, And strength against them: These were enough to answer, and recompense, all the Points that a Christian shall take in this way. But besides these, take we notice of Four more: A four-fold Benefit. Four considerable benefits accruing from this practise. It will be of great use unto a Christian, to make him,

1. *Humble.*
2. *Thankful.*
3. *Watchful.*
4. *Pitiful.*

Humble in *Himself*; Thankful to his *God*; Watchful over his *Sin*; and Pitiful towards *Others*. All, benefits of singular Excellency and Worth! Touch upon them briefly.

Frequent remembrance of a mans own Sins will be of speciall Use, to make, and keep him *Humble*. So it is, that there is in the Heart of every man, naturally an accursed root of *Pride*, which is very apt to spring and sprout forth, being watered (as it were) with all the common Favours and Blessings that God poureth out upon him, 1. To make and keep the Soul humble.
of

of what kind soever they be, Good things of *Fortune* (as they were called), of *Nature*, of *Grace*, (I mean common Grace); Birth, Beauty, Riches, Honours, gifts and endowments of the Mind; any of these, not being Sanctified, are apt to puff up the Soul, to breed a *Tympany* in it. Now the frequent remembrance of Sins will be of special use to prevent it, to make the Soul humble, and keep it humble. Such Use the *Church* tells us she had of it, (as *Montanus*, and the *Vulgar Latine* render the word in that Text, *Lam. 3. 19, 20. Remembring my Affliction, and my misery*, (saith our Translation); my Affliction, and my *Rebellion*, my *Transgression*, (say they) which senie the word in the Original will well bear, as we find it rendred, *1 Sam. 20. 30. the Wormwood, and the Gall*, (that is, the bitterness of both) *my Soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. Incurvatur*, it is bowed down. The soul of man naturally is Proud, apt to be inordinately lift up in him. Now the Remembrance, as of former *Afflictions* which he hath lain under; so of former *Sins* which he hath fallen into, will be of special use to humble it, to make it keep so. This effect it had in and upon this our *Apostle*, (as you have heard.) The remembrance of his former Sins made him Vile in his own eyes. This it was that made him think and speak so meanly of himself, to account himself the *least* of
the

רִמְיָוִי
Rebelli-
onis mea,
Montan.
Trans-
gressionis
mea. V.L.

the Apostles, unworthy to be one of that number; ; the *least of Saints*, nay, *less than the least of them*, (as the Text hath it, Ephes. 3.8.) *Because* (saith he) *I persecuted the Church of God*, 1 Cor. 15. 9. Thus it was: As the *Buffetings of Satan*, (of which he speaketh, 2 Cor. 12. 7.) those temptations wherewith he was exercised after his Conversion; so the remembrance of his former *Sins* committed before his Conversion, was to him of great use to keep him from *being exalted above measure*; a thing which by reason of the many and great priviledges now conferred upon him, he was subject to, and in danger of. Thus God sometimes suffers his *Chosen Vessels*, those whom he purposeth to make some special use of, and to confer some signal Favours upon, to fall into some great Sin, or sins, haply in their Youth, it may be Afterwards, that so the Remembrance of them may be a means to keep their Spirits in a humble frame and temper, from being inordinately lift up in them; being to them as the *Peacocks black Leggs* are vulgarly conceived to be unto him; which looking down upon, he presently letteth fall his *proud Plumes*. Here is the *first* of those *Eenefits*, which a Christian may reap from this reflecting upon his Sins. A benefit of singular Use; there being nothing more dangerous to the Soul, than this spiritual *Tympany*.

2. 2dly. As it will be of great Use to make
 To make men Humble, so *Thankful*. As Humble in
 Men themselves, so Thankful to their *God*. A
 thankful. fruit naturally growing upon this Branch.
 Remembrance of former sins Repented of,
 and Pardoned, it calleth to mind two
 things; *Gods Goodness, our own Unworthiness*.
 Gods goodness in *sparing* of us; not taking
 us, as the *Scribes and Pharisees* tell our *Savi-*
our that *woman* was, whom they brought
 before him, *John 8. 4.* *ἐπαυτομένη*, in the
 very Act of sinne, and so bringing us to
 answer (as they did her) before His Tri-
 bunal, for those Sins which we wanted
 Grace, and space to Repent of. Nor yet
 onely sparing us, giving us a time to Re-
 pent, but also *working that Repentance* in us,
 and, upon our Repenting, *Pardoning them*;
 and instead of punishing us according to
 our deservings, conferring many special
 Graces and Favours upon us; of all which,
 of the least of which, we were altogether
 unworthy. Both these, the remembrance of
 former sins calleth to mind. And so do-
 ing, it cannot but be a special means to raise
 up the Heart to a Thankful apprehension,
 and acknowledgment thereof. Of such
 Use was it to this blessed *Apostle*, as we may
 take notice from the 12. & 13. verses in this
 Chapter, where calling to mind his former
 sins, he presently breaketh forth into bless-
 ing and magnifying of *Jesus Christ* for his
 rich

rich Grace and Mercy towards him; *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the Ministry, who was before a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, Injurious: but I obtained mercy.* So again, *vers. 17.* Having here confessed himself to be the chief of sinners, and after declared what God had done for him, how he had made him a Patern to all that should hereafter believe on him; he thereupon in the next words breaketh forth into that affectionate Gratulation, *Now, unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever, Amen.* Thus, the reflecting upon our sins after that we have obtained Mercy, it will be a means as to cause us to take shame to our selves, so to give glory to God, the Glory of his Grace and Mercy in sparing us, in pardoning us, and conferring so many undeserved favours upon us. It will be of special use to make us *thankful*.

And (3dly) as *thankful*, so *watchful*, watchful over those and the like sins. The remembrance of dangers formerly escaped will make men the more warie, they will take heed how they come nigh that fire, in which they have before been burnt or scorched, or that precipice from which once they fell, or passing that way wherein they have fallen among Thieves. Thus, Christians having their sins in remembrance, and mainteining

3.
To make
them
watchful
over
themselves.

I in

in their Souls, a sight and sense of them, it will be of special use to them, to make them more cautelous & wary, to take heed of all the occasions of them of coming near unto them. As for the Soul, that hath banished the sense and remembrance of it's sins, it careth not, what sins it rusheth upon and runs into. *Paul*, speaking of the *Gentiles*, he saith of them, *that being past feeling*, *Ἀπαλυσμένοι*, *postquam dedoluerunt* (as *Beza* renders it) having cast away all sense of, and sorrow for sin, they then gave themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness, *Ephes. 4. 19.* The best way then to be kept from sin, is to maintein the sense of it in the Soul. To which end, the frequent reflecting upon sins past, will conduce much. By this means it was, that *David kept himself from his iniquitie*, (as he saith he did, *Psal. 18. 23.*) from the sin which he was most inclined to, by having it frequently in his remembrance.

4. Fourthly and lastly, The frequent reflecting upon our own sins, will be a special means to make us more pittyful and charitable towards others. Not to be so ready to espie their faults, nor so harsh and rigid, in censuring them for their failings and infirmities. What is the cause, why *Hypocrites* are so quick-sighted in espying, and so forward in judging and censuring of others? Surely, it is the want of reflecting upon themselves; They see the mote that is in their brothers

4.
To make
them
pittyful
towards
others.

their eye, but consider not the beam that is in
 their own eye, (as our Saviour saith of them)
 Mat. 7. 3. Surely, were men more busied
 at home, more taken up with remembring
 and considering their own failings, their
 own sins, what they have been, what they
 have done, they would be more pittiful,
 more tender-hearted towards others. It is
 the Apostle's Argument which he putteth
 into *Titus* his mouth, willing him to make
 use of it, in dissuading Christians from be-
 ing too censorious towards their Brethren,
 or any other whosoever, but to induce them
 to deal tenderly and gently with them, *Tit.*
 3. 2, 3. Put them in mind (saith he) to
 speak evil of no man, (that is, wrongfully, or
 causlessly, whether by aspersing of them, or
 detracting from them), to be no brawlers, but
 gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men; *Πρὸς
 πάντας ἀνθρώπους*, all men: non tantum ad-
 versus fidei consortes, sed etiam adversus contra-
 dictores, (as *Grotius* well explains it) not on-
 ly such as profess the same faith with them-
 selves, but such as are adversaries to it.
 Even these he would have private *Christi-
 ans*, (for of such he there speaketh, not of
Titus himself, and the Ministers of Christ,
 who yet, (as our new *Annotator* hath it)
 are to do nothing in rage or passion, but
 with a spirit of meekness, shewing all meek-
 ness unto all men, Gentiles as well as Jews,
 Enemies as well as Friends; but of private

Christians; the word in the Original being of the plural number, ἐν δεικνυμένοις) to deal gently with, not being too rigid in censuring them, much less in wholly despairing of them. But shew meekness, *all meekness*, πᾶσαν πραότητα, omnem, i. e. *summam lenitatem*, Great meekness and gentleness towards them. And why so? For (saith he) *we our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts, &c.* vers. 3. Certainly, the more a man reflects upon himself, and the better acquainted he is with his own heart and life, the more pittiful and tender-hearted, the more compassionate he will be towards others. To proceed no further: These *benefits* may a Christian reap from the reflecting upon himself, the frequent remembrance of his own sins. Which, let it induce every of us, to exercise our selves herein.

Caution.
Christians not to pore too much upon their sins so as to give way to inordinate dejections.

Which yet, let it be warily and rightly understood. Not that I would have Christians to stand continually poring upon their sins, so fixing their thoughts upon them, that their hearts and spirits should be inordinately dejected, and cast down in the remembrance of them. This God requires not, neither ought Christians to give way to it. *David* was a man, much in the remembrance of his sins, yet, he would not give way to such soul-dejections and disquietments, for which, we find him check-

ing

ing himself in those two *Psalms*, 42. and 43. where we have the same *Expostulation* thrice repeated, *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? Why art thou disquieted within me, &c?* Christians, should not so look upon their sins, as that they should give way to such dejections of Spirit, as may render their condition uncomfortable to themselves and unserviceable to others. In this case, that of the *Preacher* takes place, *Eccles.* 7. 17. *Be not over-much wicked*, that is, *judicio tuo* (as *Junius* expounds it), in thine own apprehension and judgment. In such a sense it is, that in the verse there foregoing, he biddeth us not to be over-righteous or over-wise; *Be not Righteous over-much*, neither make thy self over-wise; that is, do not think thy self so to be. So, here in this verse, which is subjoyned as an *Antitheton*, set in opposition to the former, *Be not over-much wicked*, viz. in thy own apprehension. And let me apply it unto you, (I mean all, and only such as are trulie penitent sinners); *Be not you in this sense wicked over-much*, stand not poring too much upon your sins, sorrowing over them, as the *Apostle* saith, the *Heathen* did over their dead, *1 Thes.* 4. 13. *as having no hope*. Onely upon occasions call them to remembrance, making use hereof, to those ends and purposes which I have now spoken of.

And as we are to do this at other times;

Sins to
be re-
mem-
bred in a
special
way, at
special
times.

Jan. 22.
1661.
A day of
Solemn
Humili-
ation.

so then, more especially, when God calleth us to the humbling of our Souls before him, and to seek his Face, for the removing or diverting of some judgment felt or feared. Now, at such a time to call to mind our sins, is an exercise most fit and proper, being now *Opus diei in die suo*, a work done in season. And this, do we all of us now this day, being a day of *Solemn Humiliation*, so appointed to be by publick Authority, wherein, the whole Nation is required to seek God in a Solemn manner, for the diverting and preventing, as of such other Judgments, which we may justly fear to hang over the head of the Nation, so in special of that which is already in part broke forth upon us, (whereof the poor, as elsewhere, so in this place, not a few of them, are very sensible, whose necessitous condition, I shall commend to your charitable consideration, desiring you to extend your free and liberal contributions to their relief, which is also a work of the day) and doth further sadly threaten us, viz. The *Judgment of Famine*, which, by reason of the unseasonableness of the Season, may justly be feared. This *is the work of the day*. For the furthering whereof, let all of us now call to mind our own sins. *I do remember my faults this day*, (saith *Pharaohs* Butler unto him) *Gen. 41. 9.* And the like let every of us do. Sure we are, this is the provoking

king Cause, as of other Judgements, so of this. *He turneth a Fruitful Land into Barrenness, for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein,* Psal. 107. 34. Call we our selves then every one of us to account for our finnes this day, humbling our selves in the sight and presence of God for them, that so, we remembring them, God may be pleased graciously to forget them, and forgive them, so as not to charge them upon the Head of the Nation. In doing hereof, we shall much promote the service of the Day; and much help forward the great business both of Church and State, which is now in the hands of the Great Council of the Land. Certainly the great Stumbling-blocks that lie in the way of Mercy, they are the Sinnes of the Nation. O Let every of us, put to our hands this Day to the removing of them, by taking out of the way, as much as we can, the finnes of others, Humbling our selves for them, and seeking the Pardon of them; however our own finnes, by calling them to mind, Humbling, Shaming, and Condemning our selves for them; withal, putting them away in the full purpose and resolution of our Souls, never more to give entertainment to them. *Thus wash we, and make we our selves clean, putting away the evil of our doings from before the eyes of our God, (as he requires his People to do, Isai. 1. 16.);*

And then do we, what in the next words he allowes them to do, *Come, let us Reason together, &c.* begging from him Mercy for our selves, and the Nation, being hopefully and comfortably assured that the Lord will smell a Sweet savour of rest from this our *Sacrifice*; and that both *Church* and *State* shall find it the best service we could perform unto them, which the Lord enable every of us to do. Thus I have done with the first of these three *Branches*, I pass now to the second.

2. *Branch*.
The Penitent
sinner
forward
in ac-
know-
ledging
his own
Sinnes.

THe truly Penitent Sinner, as he is frequent in Remembring, so forward in acknowledging of his own sins. So was *Paul*. Having here occasion to make mention of *Sinners*, he calleth to remembrance his own finnes, and Remembring them, he Acknowledgeth them; confessing himself to be a Sinner, a great sinner, yea, the chief of Sinners; Of whom I am chief. The like disposition and practice we find in the *Man after Gods own Heart*, holy *David*. As his finnes were often in his eye, so he was ready to acknowledge them. *I acknowledged my Transgression, and my Sinne was ever before me.* (saith he) *Psal.* 51. 3. Such a frequent Remembrancer, and ingenuous Confessor of his Sinnes was he. And such are all truly Penitent sinners.

And

And it cannot be otherwise: Their hearts *Reas. 1.*
 (in the first place) being full (as it were) *His Heart*
 with the sight, and sense of Sinne, they *is full*
 must have vent. The Story tells us of *with the*
Joseph, Gen. 45. ver. 1, 2. how that, his heart *Sinne.*
 being full, as it was, with the remembrance
 of what his Brethren had done to him,
 and his Affections towards them, he could
 not contain, *he could not refrain himself*
before all that stood by him, but he shed
 Tears abundantly; yea, (the company be-
 ing gone) *he wept aloud.* He could not but
 give vent to that affection wherewith his
 heart was full. And *David* tells us the like
 of himself, *Psal. 39. 3.* My heart (saith he)
was hot within me; while I was musing, the
fire burned: then spake I with my tongue. So
 it is with *Affections,* (as it is with *Fire*) the
 heart being full of them, they will not be
 smothered, they will not be kept close; they
 will seek vent; and be ready to break forth,
 as occasion is offered. And so will these
 Holy Affections in the heart of a truly Peni-
 tent sinner, his Sorrow for sinne, his Hatred
 and Indignation against sinne; his heart
 being full of them, it will be seeking vent,
 ready to break forth in a humble, and
 hearty Confession and Acknowledgement
 of it.

Reas. 2.
 Again, in such a Soul, the *Bed of sinne* *The Bed*
 (as I may say) *is broken.* Now, as it is in *of Sin is*
 the *Body,* if the bed of Worms be broken, *broken*
in him. they

they are ready to come away; and such tough and viscous humours as are coagulated in the Stomack, being dissolved, they are easily evacuated. Even so in the Soul; If the Bed of peccant Humours, of sinful Lusts be there once broken, the *Works of Satan dissolved*, (as Saint John saith, that Christ was manifest to this end, *ἵνα λύσῃ, ut dissolvat, That he might dissolve, (or destroy) the works of the Devil*; that is, our Sinnes, which are destroyed by dissolving of them, as many things are, 1 John 3. 8.) as in measure they are in every truly Regenerate person, in whom the Power of Sinne is broken; they will now be ready to break forth, and come away, (as I may say) by way of Confession, and Acknowledgement. Thus you see that it is so, and how it cometh so to be.

Two
Questi-
ons re-
solved.

For further *Explication*, and *Illustration*, propound we these two useful *Enquiries* touching this *Acknowledgement* which Penitent sinners are so forward in.

1. *To whom they are so ready to make this Acknowledgement.*
2. *What kind of Acknowledgement it is that they make.*

Q. 1.
To whom
is he so
ready to
make
this ac-
know-
ledge-
ment,

For the First, *To whom they are so ready to make this Acknowledgement.*

A. For Answer, Know we that the acknowledgment of Sin, is either unto *God*, or *Man*. The former, to *God*, either *publickly*, or *privately*;

vately; the latter, to *Man*, either *Secretly*, or *openly*. *Secretly*, either to the *Ministers of God*, or to other *private Christians*. *Openly*, which is either *Regular*, injoynd by the Church, or *Occasional* and *Arbitrary*. All these wayes Sinne is confessed and acknowledged: And all these wayes a sinner truly Penitent will be ready to acknowledge his finnes.

1. In the first place unto *God*. The Prodigall sonne in the Gospel, upon his return to Unto God^o his Father, at his first meeting with him, after that his father had expressed his fatherly Affection unto him, presently he breaks forth into a humble acknowledgement of his finnes unto him, *Father I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight*, Luke 15. 21. This is the first thing that a poor sinner doth, when once he is brought home unto God, and hath in any measure tasted of his Grace and Mercy, he presently falleth down before Him, in an humble acknowledgment of his Sinnes unto him. This will he do at his first *Conversion*, and this he is ready ever after to do upon all Occasions, renewing his Acknowledgements of sinne, as finnes themselves are renewed. So did David; *I acknowledged my Transgressions*, (saith he in the Text forenamed) Psal. 51. 3. And to whom was it that he acknowledged them? Why, firstly and principally to his *God*, whom he had offended. So he expaines

plaines it in the verse following, *Against thee onely have I sinned*; that is, against him immediately and properly: And therefore to him it is that he acknowledged his Sinne. So he elsewhere declareth it, Psal. 32. 5. *I acknowledged my Sinne unto Thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid; I said I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord, &c.* And this will every truly Penitent sinner readily do. Apprehending how he hath offended and provoked his *God* by his sins, he will be ready to acknowledge them unto him.

Both
publick-
ly and
private-
ly.

And this will he do (as I said) both *Publickly* and *Privately*. *Publickly*, joyning with the Congregation in the publick confession and acknowledgment of Sinnes; and that both in Confessions *ordinary* and *extraordinary*. And as *Publickly*, so *Privately*, when there is no other witnesse but *God* and his own Conscience, then will he be ready to acknowledge his Sinnes. And that again, both in his daily, and ordinary Prayers, as also at other times of extraordinary Humiliation. All these I might shew you, how they have been both *injoynd* and *praetised*; injoynd by *God*, and praetised by his *Saints*. But I shall not dwell upon this, the Text leading me rather to that other kind of Acknowledgement, which is before, or unto, *Men*.

2.
Unto men

And thus true Penitents will be ready
to

to acknowledge their Sinnes. And that (as I said) sometimes *Secretly*, sometimes *Openly*.

1. *Secretly*, or *Privately*, either unto the *Ministers of God*, or unto *private Christians*, I. Secretly,
or Pri-
vately.
viz. at such times as they are by them charged with their Sins, and in a friendly way Admonished of them, or Reproved for them. In this case, (for I speak not now of that Confession of Sinnes, which is after a sort extorted, and drawn from a man by, or through trouble of Mind, and Conscience, in which Christians not onely may, but ought (when other means avail not) to repair either unto the *Ministers of God*, as most fit for such a purpose, being his *Interpreters*; or else to some wise and faithful Friend that is able to minister a word of Advice and Comfort to them, opening and discovering their Sinnes unto them; even as the *Sick man* doth his secret troubles to his *Physitian* or *Chirurgion*. I speak not of this now; but onely of the Acknowledgement of Sin unto others, when it is charged upon them by way of *Admonition*, or *Reprehension*. In this case (I say) the Soul that is truly Penitent for sin, will be ready to confess, and acknowledge it. So was it with *David*, *Nathan* no sooner cometh unto him, and chargeth his sin upon him, discovering to him the heinousness of it, but presently he makes confession

on of it. *I have sinned against the Lord,* 2 Sam. 12. 13. This would not *Saul* do. When *Samuel* cometh unto him in the like way, charging him with that act of disobedience of his, in *sparing Agag & the best of the spoil*, contrary to God's expresse Commandement; he was far from any such ingenuous acknowledgment; but doth what he could to hide it, as we may see, 1 Sam. 15. 13, 14, 15. Thus, wicked and ungodly men, being charged with their sins, they will either hide them by denying them, or defend them, or excuse them, or extenuate them what they can; it may be, falling out, and quarrelling with the persons that shall strike upon this string, meddling with their sins. So did *Cain* with God himself, when the Lord came to him, and asked him where his Brother was, whom he had murdered, he replieth, *I know not: Am I my Brothers keeper?* Gen. 4. 9. First, seeking to liide his sin, then quarrelling with his *Maker*, who came to charge it upon him. And even so are some (too many) ready to deal with the *Ministers* of God, when they come to touch upon their sins, whether publickly or privately, they are ready to quarrel with them about it, as if they took too much upon them. So did the people of *Israel*, upon whom the Prophet *Hosea*, among other their great sins that they were guilty of, chargeth this as the chief, *This people*

people are as they that strive with the Priest, Hof. 4. 4. They would endure no reprover, no, though it were a Priest, or Prophet, a Minister of God, that had Authoritie from him, to do what he did. Thus are some ready to oppose the Ministers of Christ, who, though they be their spiritual *Physitians*, yet they will not endure that they should meddle with their diseases; which if they do, it may be they will ever after hate and maligne them, as *Ahab* did *Micaiah*. And hating them, they will smite them with their tongues, and be ready to contrive what mischief against them they may. So did the *Jews* against their *Jeremiah*, as himself sets it forth, *Jer.* 18. 18. *Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah, &c. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.* So is it with presumptuous sinners. But it is far otherwise with those that are truly penitent. They being in themselves convinced of their finnes, they will be ingenuous in the confessing and acknowledging of them, when they are charged upon them by way of Admonition or Reprehension, whether by the Minister of God, or any other.

And as they will be ready to do this secretly and privately, so also *openly* and *publicly*. And that

1. In a Regular way, if called thereunto,
2. Openly and Publicly.
1. In a Regular and way.

and required to do it by the *Discipline and Authority of the Church*. Thus did that *incessuous Corinthian*: being Excommunicated for that great sinne of his, he manifests his repentance, by acknowledging of his sinne, and by his abundant sorrow for it. Whereupon, lest he should be surcharged and swallowed up therewith, the Apostle will-eth the Church to forgive him, to receive him to Communion, and to comfort him, 2 Cor. 2. 7. And such a confession and acknowledgment of sinne, sinners truly penitent, (where the Censures of the Church are rightly dispensed according to Christs Institution) neither ought to be, nor yet will be, averse from, but ready to submit unto, that so they may give satisfaction to the Church, by the *confession* of their *Sinnes*, and *profession* of their *Repentance*, which they have, by their evil Example, offended and scandalized.

2.
Inaspon-
taneous
way.

2. But leaving that also, the acknowledgment which the Text leadeth us more directly to, as it is an open, so an *Arbitrary* Acknowledgment. And in this kind and way, we shall find sinners truly penitent, to be forward, and ready, to acknowledge their sins: And, that both *upon their Conversion*, and *after it*.

Upon
their
Conver-
sion.

1. *Upon their Conversion*. Thus we read of the hearers of *John the Baptist*, how they *were baptised of him, confessing their sinnes*,
Mat.

Mat. 3. 6. Being convinced of their finnes, 'Εξομολογούμενοι, by his Ministry, and his Preaching unto ^{λογίζεσθαι} them, they could not contain; but they came ^{est aperta} unto *John*, not onely confessing their sins ^{& clara} unto him, in a private and clancular way, ^{voce Con-} (as *Maldonate*, and other Romish Expositors ^{literi:} would have it, making this a ground for ^{Paræus} their *auricular Confession*), but publickly ^{ad hoc.} and openly before the people; which the ^{Declarat} word in the Original, 'Εξομολογούμενοι, im- ^{palam} ports, (as *Beza* and *Pareus* observe). And ^{profiteri.} the like, we read of those *Converts at Ephe-* ^{Beza.} *sus*, Act. 19. 18. Being wrought upon, by the Miracle which they had seen; *Many of them came* (saith the Text) *and confessed, and shewed their deeds*; 'Εξομολογούμενοι καὶ ἀναγγέλλοντες, *confessing them*, not secretly but openly. Among whom, some and many of those, *who have used curious* (that is *Magical*) *Arts*, making Divinations, by Judicial Astrology, *They brought forth their Books, and burnt them before all men*, in the presence of all the people, (as the next verse there hath it, *vers. 19.*). So powerful is the work of Gods Grace, in the hearts of true Converts, it will make them willing and ready to acknowledg their sins.

2. And this they will be ready to do, not ^{Ever} only at their *first Conversion*, but ^{after.} ever *after*. Sins committed before Conversion, or after, they will be forward in confessing, and acknowledging of them. This we may see in

Three
Eminent
Confes-
sours.

David.

David, Solomon, Paul. Take we these three Instances. All of them being persons of Eminencie, two of them *Kings*, the other an *Aposile*; yet, see how forward they were all of them at this work. *David* a King, and so subject to no Superior Power, that could injoyne such an acknowledgment of sin unto him; yet, see how he taketh it upon himself, making a voluntarie confession and acknowledgment of his sinne; That great sinne of his in the matter of *Uriah*, whereby he had given so great scandal to the Church, he maketh, a free and open Confession of it before the Church. To that purpose, compiling and penning that *Penitential Psalm*, Psal. 51. Which he committed and delivered to the *Chief Musitian*, (as the Title of the Psalm informs us), that by him it might be published in the Temple, and there ever after kept, and so be not only a *Testimony* of his Repentance to the Church in that present age, to which he desired to give Satisfaction, but a *Monument* of it in all succeeding Ages, to the end of the world.

Solomon.

And what *David* the Father did, the like did *Solomon* his Son after him. Having fallen foully and scandalously, to the great Offence of the Church, over which God had made him Supream Governour; he afterwards penneth, and publisheth to the world, that *Penitential Retraction*, his

Book

Book of Ecclesiastes, wherein, he freely and ingenuously confesseth before all the world, the vanity and sinfulness of his former ways and courtes. Thus did these two Kings, doing that voluntarily, which no power upon Earth could have compelled them to.

And the same, did this our Apostle Saint *Paul*. *Paul*. Having been before his Conversion, an open and bitter Enemy to the Truth, speaking evil of the Doctrine of the Gospel, and doing all the mischief that he could, to all that professed it; being Converted, and brought home to Christ, he was ever hereafter an *Ingenious Confessor*. Having his former sins ever in his eye, he had them also (as I may say) at his *tongues end*, ready to confess and acknowledg them upon all occasions. This we find him doing at *Jerusalem*, before the *Chief Captain*, in a great and promiscuous Assembly of all sorts of persons, *I persecuted this way unto the death* (saith he), *binding, and delivering into prison, both men and women*, *Act. 22. 4. &c.* And the like he did again at *Cesarea*, in a very Solemn Audience, before *Festus* and *Agrippa*, and *Queen Bernice*, the *Chief Captains*, and *principal Men of the City*, *Act. 26. 10.* *I did many things* (saith he) *against the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, many of the Saints did I shut up in Prison, and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them, and punished them often in every Synagogue, and*

compelled them to *Blaspheme*; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange Cities; such Cities as were not within the Territories of *Judea*; as *Damascus*, &c. and so therein going beyond his Commission. Thus did he confess his sins by word of mouth.

And the like he did by *Writing*, acknowledging them under his hand, making a publick Record of them, that all the Churches of God might take notice of them. This he doth in his *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. and to his *Galatians*, *Gal.* 1. 13. And so here in this *Epistle* to *Timothy*, in this chapter, where we find him not onely making a *general Confession*, which he doth in the *Text*, charging himself to be the *chief of sinners*; but particularly, pointing out his finnes what they were, *vers.* 13. *I was a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, Injurious*, &c. Thus free and open was *Paul* in these acknowledgments, not regarding who or what they were, that took notice of these his confessions, whether Friends or Enemies, Good or Bad; nor caring how often he made them: taking all occasions to do it, as if he had thought he could never do it often enough. Behold we then in him, and these other Paterns, the true disposition of a Gracious Soul, of a truly penitent sinner; one that hath truly repented of his finnes, and hath tasted

of the grace and mercy of God, in the pardoning and forgiving of them, he will ever after be ready to confess and acknowledge them; and that not onely to God, but also to Men, and that not onely *Secretly*, but *Openly*, as occasion is offered.

Q. But what, (you will say), Is every Christian bound to imitate these Paterns, to follow their Example, doing as they did, making such an open confession and acknowledgment of his finnes?

Q. whether all Christians be bound to follow these Paterns.

1. To this I Answer, 1. In some cases he may be; as, viz. 1. where the finnes have been *open*. *Open finnes*, as they call for *open Reprehension*, *Them that sinne rebuke before all, that others also may fear*, (so Paul wil- leth *Timothy* to do) 1 *Tim.* 5. 20. that is, that do sin openly, to the publick scandal of others, (as *Beza*, and some others expound it); so for *open Confession*, and acknowledgment. Such had *Dauids*, such had *Salomons*, and such had *Paul's* finnes been, finnes that all the Churches rung of. *You have heard of my conversation in times past*, (saith he to his *Galatians*) *Gal.* 1. 13. I did so and so. They had heard of his *Sinnes*, and therefore they shall hear of his *Repentance*, testified and declared by his hearty confession and acknowledgement of those finnes.

A. 1. In some cases they are, as where the sins have been open. *peccantes cum publice offendit.* *Beza. Gr. Annot. in loc.*

2. Again (2dly.), where the *Glory of God*, or the *Publick Good* requires it, there, though

glory, & the publick good require the it.

the finnes have been private, and secret, yet the acknowledgement of them ought to be publick, where the *glory of God* requires it. Upon this ground *Josuah* requires *Achan* to make an open Confession of that sinne which he had done secretly. *My son, (saith he) give glory to God, and confess unto Him, and tell me what thou hast done,* Josh. 7. 19. (where the publick good requires it. Upon this ground *Jonah* confesseth and acknowledgeth his sinne unto the Marriners, for the saving of those that were in the Ship with him: *Jonah* 1. 12. *I know (saith he to them) that for my sake this great Tempest is come upon you.*

A. 2.
Penitent
sinners,
though
bound,
yet ready
to
make open
confessions.

But (in the second place) we speak not here of what all Christians are bound to do, but, what upon occasion, being Penitent sinners, they will be ready to do. This was *Paul's* case in the Text. This acknowledgement of his was spontaneous, and voluntary, he being induced thereunto by no other respect, but onely out of his desire to take shame to himself, and give glory to God. In special, the glory of his Grace, which having been so gloriously manifested in, and upon him, in receiving so great a sinner to Mercy, he desireth to take all occasions to extol and magnifie. And to that end it is, that he maketh such frequent mention of his finnes; making such open confessions and acknowledgements of them.

And

And upon this ground great Sinners specially, having tasted of the like Mercy in pardoning their finnes, they will be ready upon all occasions to acknowledge them, that so they may declare, and set forth the riches of Gods Grace exercised towards them. *Come, and hear, all-ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul* (saith David) Psal. 66. 16. And thus a Penitent Sinner having tasted of saving Mercy, in the pardoning and healing of his Sinnes, he will be ready ever-after, to declare, and set forth, what God hath done for his Soul. To which end, as occasion is offered, he will be forward in the confessing and acknowledging of his Sinnes.

But, *What kind of Acknowledgement is that which he maketh?* That is the second Question propounded. A Question of great consequence and importance, and that for the differencing and distinguishing of this from other false, and counterfeit Acknowledgements. Even wicked and ungodly men may, and sometimes do, upon occasion, confess and acknowledge their finnes. So did Cain; *Mine iniquity is greater than it can be forgiven,* (so our Margin readeth it, following Montanus, and others) Gen. 4. 13. So did Pharaoh; *I have sinned* (saith he to Moses once and again) Exod. 9. 27. 10. 16. So did Saul. *I have sinned against*

Q. 2.
What kind of acknowledgement it is that the Penitent sinner maketh.

the Lord (saith he to *Samuel*) 1 *Sam.* 15. 24. And so did *Judas*. *I have sinned in betraying innocent Blood*, (saith he to the *Chief Priests*) *Mat.* 27. 4.) And the like, meer carnal men will sometimes be ready to do. Being charged, and pressed by the Ministers of God, or others, especially when the Hand of God lyeth Heavy upon them; now they will be ready to assent unto what *Paul* here saith of himself, confessing themselves to be sinners, great sinners; yea, the *chief of Sinners*. Thus we may sometime meet with *Pauls words*, coming out of the mouths of those, who never knew what *Paul's spirit* meant. They will, upon occasion, acknowledge their sinnes, who never knew what it was to Repent of them. How then shall we distinguish betwixt the one, and the other? The acknowledgement of a sinner truly Penitent, and that which cometh from a spirit of Hypocrisie in a wicked, or carnal man?

A. In Answer hereunto, let me present you with some few *properties* of this sincere Acknowledgement, whereby it may be discerned from that which is false and counterfeit. In all which I shall still have an eye to the *Confessor* here in the Text, this blessed Apostle, illustrating each particular

1. It is from his practice and example. Voluntary. The acknowledgment of the true Penitent sinner is (first) *Voluntary*, and *Free*. So

So it is; though *injoyed*, yet not *extorted*, not constrained. Such is the *Hypocrite's* acknowledgement for the most part: extorted and drawn from him against his will, either by some *Judgement of God*, present or imminent, felt or feared; or by the *Rack of a tormenting Conscience*. Such was *Pharaoh's* confession to *Moses*, drawn from him (as water is out of a Still, or Lymbick, by the fire put under it) by the Judgements of God, which he and his people lay under. And such was *Judas's* confession to the Chief Priests, extorted from him by the rack (as I said) of a tormenting Conscience. In such cases, even the worst of men will sometimes confess and acknowledge their finnes, which at other times, when their condition is quiet, and prosperous, they will hardly be brought to do; Like a man that is sick, being at Sea, and so emptieth his stomack freely; but no sooner comne a Shoar, but he is well again, and all is quiet. But it is otherwise with the *True Penitent*. In acknowledging of sinne, he is a *Volunteer*, doing what he doth (as *Peter* would have *Ministers* to feed their flocks, 1 Pet. 5. 2.) *μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς ἀλλ' ἐκείῳς*, not by constraint, but willingly. Such are Gods People in all the services they do unto Him, or for Him; they are a *willing people*. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy Power*, Psal. 110. 3. When God exerciseth his power, the

the power of his Grace, upon a poor Sinner, changing and renewing him, bringing him home to himself, then he cometh unto him willingly, freely pouring forth his Soul before him in a voluntary confession and acknowledgement of his Sinnes. Willingly confessing unto God, and not unwillingly unto Men. And this he is ready to do, not onely in times of Distress, but even then when his condition is, in all respects, most Comfortable. Such is the acknowledgement which here we meet with in the Text. *Paul*, when he uttered these words, he was in a quiet and comfortable condition; under no distress, whether outward, or inward, in body or mind; yet even then he remembred his sinnes; and remembring them, he acknowledgeth them. Which also, (as I have shewn) he was ready to do upon all occasions, at all other times. His readines, and forwardness herein, manifesting, that these his Confessions were not extorted, but voluntary. *Extorted Confessions* (such as those upon the Rack) are seldom true; ever suspicious. True confession, and acknowledgement, whether to God, or Man, will be free and voluntary.

2. And so (in the second place) *Ingenuous and full*. Such is not the *Hypocrites confession*. If he be drawn to an acknowledgement of his sinnes, yet therein you shall find

Ingen-
uous, and
Full.

find him, for the most part, very *partial*, and *sparing*; as much as may be, concealing and *hiding* them. Even as *Solomon* saith of the *Sluggard*, Prov. 19. 24. *He hideth his hand in his bosome, and is loath to put it forth, to bring it to his mouth.* Thus deal-eth the *Hypocrite* with his *sinnes*: his beloved, his darling *sinnes*, he hideth them in his bosome, concealing them as much as may be, loath to bring them to his mouth, to bring them forth by an open acknowledgment of them. Where he cannot hide them, he will endeavour to *excuse* them; varnishing, and colouring them over with some fair and specious pretences. Where he cannot excuse them, he will seek to *extenuate* them, that they may not seem so great and foul as they are. Where he cannot excuse, or extenuate them, he will endeavour to *evade* them, by shifting them off from himself to some other. So little ingenuity is there to be found in his Confessions. All these we shall find in that acknowledgment which *Samuel* drew from King *Saul*, 1 Sam. 15. The Prophet coming to him, to charge upon him, that foul act of his, in sparing *Agag*, and the best of the Spoil, contrary to Gods express command; he first thinketh to hide his sin, by courting of the Prophet, and by his avowing, and boasting of his Obedience: *Blessed be thou of the Lord, (saith he) I have per-*
formed

*formed the Commandement of the Lord, v. 13. Therein dealing like Solomons Adulteress, who eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness, (as he saith of her) Prov. 30. 20. When this would not serve his turn, but he saw that his sinne was discovered, and found out, the Prophet convincing him of it, by too plain an evidence, What meaneth then this bleating of the Sheep in my ears, and the lowing of Oxen which I hear? ver. 14. Then he falleth to his shifting, shuffling it off from himself, and laying the blame wholly upon the People, (even as Aaron also once did, when Moses charged him with making, and setting up of the golden Calf, he puts it off to the people; Let not the Anger of my Lord wax hot, (saith he) thou knowest the people that they are set on Mischief, Exod. 32. 22. so he) The people spared the best of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, ver. 15. And thus devolving, and turning it off from himself, withall he seeketh to colour over both his Act and theirs, setting a fair gloss upon it, guilded it over with a pretence of Piety, The people spared the best of the Sheep and Oxen, to Sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; (as it there followeth). When that would not serve, but that the Prophet, dealing plainly with him, had both shewen him the heinous nature of that sinne, calling it *Rebellion*, and comparing it to the sin of
*Witch-**

Witchcraft and Idolatry, Vers. 23. and charged it home upon him, telling him, how he had therein rejected the word of the Lord, for which, he must expect a just Retaliation to be rejected by him; *Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King*, now he is brought to confess and acknowledge his sin, *I have sinned*, &c. But see still how he goeth about to mince and extenuate it, pleading, that what he had done, he had done it through fear; *I transgressed the Commandment of the Lord and thy words, because I feared the people*, &c. Vers. 24. Whereupon, when he could no longer plead, *Not Guilty*, he pleadeth his *Pardon* of Course (as it were): *Now therefore*, (saith he) *I pray thee pardon my sin*, Vers. 25. So far was *Saul* from any *Ingenuity* in this his Confession! And so shall we still find it with *Hypocrites*, in their confessions and acknowledgments. Seldom or never is it, that they will deal plainly and simply, whether with *God* or *Men* in this case. But deal with both, as *Ananias* and *Sapphira* did with the *Apostles*, Act. 5. 2. *They come and bring the price of their possessions, which they had sold, and lay it down at the Apostles feet, But they kept back part of it.* Thus dealeth the *Hypocrite* in his confessions. Being, it may be, drawn to it, he will come and bring his sins, and lay them down as it were

at the feet of God and Men, in a seemingly humble confession and acknowledgment of them, but it is with some Reservation; still he keepeth back part of them, hiding and concealing some sins, or at least some Circumstances. But it is otherwise with the truly penitent sinner. He will be *Ingenuous*, confessing his finnes, and not hiding them, laying them open before God and Men, in their own colours; so giving Glory to God, and taking shame to himself. Such a *Confessour* was this our *Apostle*. In his confessions and acknowledgments how ingenuous was he? So we find him, confessing not only those finnes wherein he was *Principall*; as, his procuring Letters from the Rulers, to Persecute the Saints, and his Executing that Commission to the full, with great fury and rage, yea, going beyond it, which he sets forth (as I have shewen you) to the full, in those Texts forecited, *Act. 22. 19. & 26. 10*; but even those, wherein he was any wayes *Accessarie*: As his consenting to the death of some of the Martyrs; *When they were put to death, I gave my voice against them* (so it there followeth in the Text last named). And in particular, concerning the *Proto-Martyr Stephen*. *And when the blood of thy Martyr Stephen was shed, (saith he) I also was standing by, and consenting to his death, and kept the rayment of them that slew him, Act. 22. 20.*

Thus

Thus was he ready to confess what ever he had done in way of opposition against Christ, wherein he had had a hand or finger, been either Principal or Accessarie. So ingenuous was he in his acknowledgments, both to *God* and *Men*. And such will the acknowledgment of the truly penitent sinner be, Ingenuous and Full.

3. And being thus Ingenuous, it will also be *particular*. Not only in a General way. Such, for the most part, are the acknowledgments of Hypocrites, and of meer Carnal persons. They will (it may be) sometimes take up *Paul's* words here in the Text, confessing and acknowledging, that they are sinners, great sinners, but this is only in a general way, not with reflection upon any particular sinne or sinnes, that they charge upon themselves. Herein, not unlike to King *Nebuchadnezzar*, who had *dreamed a dream*, and was much troubled about it, but when his wise *Men* came to ask him what it was, he could not give them any accompt of it, *Dan. 2. 5.* Even so saith it with many poor carnal wretches. In time of sickness, they will then (it may be) pretend at least to great trouble of minde for their sins, breaking forth into confessions and acknowledgments, that they are sinners, great sinners, (the case is ordinarie): but come to ask them, What particular sinne or sinnes, they are

are that trouble them, that lie so heavy upon their Consciences, this they cannot tell. Now, as for such a confession of sin, it may be looked upon but as a Dream, a Delusion, no true Confession. True Confession will be *particular*.

A good Confession made in general words, chief of sinners, but with reference to particular sins. Not, but that a good confession may be made in general words. So runs the acknowledgment here in the Text; [*I am the chief of sinners*]. But still it is in reference to some particular sinne or finnes, which are in the eye of the penitent *Confessour*, whilest he maketh that general confession.

Thus was it with our Apostle here in the Text. His confession, indeed runs in general tearms, that he was the *chief of sinners*, but it is with a reference and respect unto those particular finnes, which he had confessed and acknowledged by name, but two verses before, *I was a Blasphemer, a Persecutor, &c.* This is the confession of a true penitent sinner: though the tongue may utter that confession in general tearms, yet the heart even at the same time particularizeth, having an eye to some particular sinne, or finnes, from which that confession immediately ariseth, and without which, it could not be a hearty confession. The *Maxim* is true, not more in *Philosophy*, than in *Divinitie*; *Genera nec agunt, nec patiuntur*, *Generalities* never throughly affect a man. It must not be meerly a general notion

notion of sinne, but a distinct apprehension of some particular sinne, or sinnes that will work upon the heart aright, so as to draw from it, a cordial and affectionate acknowledgment of sinne.

And such again is the confession of the true Penitent. sinner, (Take that for a fourth Property) *a cordial and affectionate Acknowledgement*: not merely *Verbal*, and *Formal*. Such is the Hypocrite's confession, a *Tongue-Confession*; an acknowledgement from the Teeth-outward, merely verbal, and formal. So may the Confessions of *Papists*, for the most part, be looked upon, which they make to their Priests, striking their hands upon their Breasts, and crying out, *Mea culpa, mea culpa; My sinne, my sinne*; whilst their Hearts (it may be) are not affected with what they make shew of. And such, and no better, it is to be feared, are the acknowledgements of some, and not a few among us, in the Confession of sinnes, which they make in the publick Congregation. Therein *they draw nigh unto God with their Mouth, and honour him with their Lips*, (as the Lord saith of his people the Jewes, *Isa. 29. 13.*) *Offering up the Calves of their lips unto him*, (as the Prophet speaks, *Hos. 14. 2.*) in saying after the Minister, repeating the words of the Confession. But in the mean time their hearts are far removed, and estranged from him,

being no wayes affected with what their Tongues utter, and pronounce. And even so is it, in their *private Confessions*. They make them but a *Lip-labour*. It may be making use of some Set-form, composed by themselves, or others, they only repeat the words in a Formal, and Customary way, but without any inward affection; their Hearts not being touched with the sense and feeling of what their Tongues utter, and confesse. Now, as for such *Confessions*, being *heartless Sacrifices*, they are odious, and abominable unto God; who, as he searcheth the Heart, so he requireth It; without it, not regarding what ever Sacrifices can be offered up unto Him. *Thou desirest not sacrifice, thou delightest not in burnt-offering*, (saith the Psalmist, not any service that is meerly external): *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit*; a heart kindly broken with the sense of Sin, *Psal. 51. 16, 17*. And such are the Sacrifices which are offered up by the Penitent Sinner to his God. All his *Prayers*, all his *Confessions*, they come from a broken and a contrite Heart; being *heartly Confessions*, affectionate Acknowledgements. Such we shall find the confessions of this our Apostle, which we so frequently meet with, breathing forth a great deal of inward Affection; expressing both *sorrow and shame, indignation and detestation*. And such are

are the acknowledgements of the True Penitent, attended, and accompanied with *Sorrow and Shame*. With *sorrow*; I will declare mine iniquity, (saith David) and I will be sorry for my sinne, Psal. 38. 18. With *Shame*; the Publican making his confession in the Temple, he doth it with shame: Standing afar off (in some remote part of the outward Court of the Temple) he would not so much as lift up his eyes unto Heaven, being ashamed of himself, Luke 18. 13. And so with *Indignation and Detestation*; Thus Paul speaking of what he had done, his forwardness in persecuting of the Saints, Act. 26. 11. I was (saith he) exceedingly mad against the Saints: A speech favouring of great Indignation against himself. And thus Job saith that he *Abhorred himself, and Repented in dust and ashes*, Job 42. 6. And Paul speaking of his *Corinthians*, sheweth how they shewed themselves True Penitents, by their *Indignation, and Revenge*; Indignation against their Sin, and Revenge which they took upon themselves for it; 2 Cor. 7. 11.

And to these is ever joyned a *serious resolution of abandoning the sinne confessed*; never more to return to it again, but to forsake it. *Who so confesseth, and forsaketh his sinnes; shall have mercy*, (saith the Wise-man) Prov. 28. 13. Such was that confession which good Shecaniah made unto Ezra in

the name of the people, *Ezra. 10. 2, 3. We have trespassed against our God (saith he) and have taken strange Wives, &c. Now, therefore let us make a new Covenant with our God, to put away all these strange Wives, &c. And thus Elihu, in Job, describeth the confession of a true Penitent, Job. 34. 31, 32. Surely, it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more: That which I see not, teach thou, If I have done iniquitie, I will do no more. Such is the confession of the true Penitent, Cordial and Affectionate. Here is a fourth Property.*

5.
Filial.

Take but one more, and that briefly. Being thus *Cordial*, it is also *Filial*. Such is the Confession which he maketh to his God; not *servile*. Such is the confession of the *Hypocrite* oft-times, a *servile*, a slavish confession, the fruit not of love to God, but of fear; and that not of a *Reverential*, but a *Slavish* fear. Such was *Balaams* Confession which he maketh, *Numb. 22. 31, 34.* when he saw the *Angel stand before him with a drawn Sword*, then he cryeth out, *I have sinned.* And so it is with some wicked and ungodly wretches, being in a strait; (as he was), stopped in their course; the *Angel of the Lord* meeting them; (as he did him) with a drawn *Sword*, some Judgment of God threatning them, it may be, Death it self staring them in the face, so as they

they apprehend themselves ready to drop into Hell; now they will confess, and acknowledge their sinnes. But this they do not out of any love to God, or hatred of their sins, but meerly out of a slavish fear: It may be in a *despairing way*, as *Cain* and *Judas* did. Now, in this the acknowledgment of a true penitent sinner differs; that, is a *filial acknowledgment*: Such was that of the *Prodigal Son*; who cometh unto his Father, as a Father; making his Confession to him under that Notion, *Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight*, Luk. 15. 21. And thus the penitent sinner comes unto his God, confessing his sinnes unto him, not simply, as to a Judge, from whom he expects nothing but severity of Justice, (as *Achan* did his sinne to *Joshua*, Josh. 7. 20.) but as unto a Father, with some apprehensions of mercy. Thus are the confessions of a truly penitent sinner, ordinarily attended and accompanied with some apprehension of mercy; (I say), either with the present sense of it, as *Pauls* confession here was, to which he subjoynes, *But I obtained mercy*. Or with the hope of it: So runs that confession, which *Shecaniah* there maketh, *Ezra* 10. 2. *We have transgressed, &c. Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.*

To proceed no further; Put these together, and hereby may the sincere confessi-

on and acknowledgment of the truly penitent sinner, be discerned from that which is false and counterfeit. And so you have both these *Questions* resolved. That which now remains of this, is the *Application*. Which I shall direct, (as in the former Branch) onely two wayes, by way of *Conviction*, *Exhortation*.

Use 1. 1. By way of *Conviction*. Is the true penitent such a Confessor, so forward and ready in such a way, to confesse and acknowledge his finnes, both to God and Man; how many then from hence may be convinced, that they are as yet, none of this number; that they are as yet in a state of impenitency; that they are as yet in their finnes, lying under the guilt and power of them? Diverse sorts there are, who come within the verge and compass of this *Conviction*. Let me take notice of some of them. Which whilst I do, let me desire you, all of you, to go along with me, trying and examining your selves, whether you be not of this number.

1. Such as In the first place, Some there are, who were never convinced of their finnes; they were never convinced of the sinfulness of their nature, never convinced of any such remarkable evils, whether in their hearts or lives, as should need any such serious confession and acknowledgment. So is it with some

some morall *civil Justiciaries*, whose lives not having been stained, with such open, such foul and scandalous finnes as they see in others; hereupon they are well opinionated of themselves. They are not as *other men are*, (as the *Pharisee* said of himself, *Luk.* 18. 11.) no Swearers, no Drunkards, no Adulterers, &c. so as they scarce see wherein they are sinners, much less great sinners. Very far are they from making any such confession and acknowledgment of their finnes, as *Paul* here doth of his. Now, as for such, let them know, that not having as yet been convinced of their finnes, they must needs be in them, lying under the power, and under the guilt of them. This is the first work that the Spirit of God worketh in the heart of a regenerate person. It is to him, a *Spirit of Conviction*; when the comforter is come, (saith our Saviour) *he shall reprove (or convince* *ἐλέγξει*) *the world of sin*, *Joh.* 16. 8. This is the work of the Spirit, and it is the first work. Certainly, the Soul which never yet knew what this work meant, must needs be far from any such ingenuous acknowledgment, as here we meet with in the Text. *Paul*, before he came to make this confession, that he was the chief of sinners, he had seen a light from Heaven shining round about him; and falling, to the earth, he heard a voice saying unto him,

Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (as we have the story) *Act. 9. 3, 4.* He had a strong, a clear, and powerful Conviction, discovering to him, and throughly convincing him of, the evil of that course which he then took. And thus must it be with every poor sinner. Before ever he will be brought to an ingenuous confession and acknowledgment of his finnes, he must see a light from Heaven, discovering them to him; and he must hear a voice from Heaven, convincing him of the sinfulness of them; and he must be struck down to the earth, humbled in the sense of his own Vilenesse, before ever his heart will be brought to such a frame and temper, as here we find in this our Apostle; to be ready thus to confess and acknowledg his finnes, both to God and Man, upon all occasions. Certainly, they who never yet knew what this Spirit of *Conviction* meant, are as yet, far from being ingenuous Confessours, and consequently, may conclude themselves to be in a state of impenitency.

2.
Such as
being
convin-
ced, will
not be
brought
to con-
fess.

In the second place; Another sort there are who have been convinced of their sins, which yet, they will not be brought to *confess* and *acknowledge*. Convinced (I say) they have been, being guilty (it may be) of some foul, open, and scandalous finnes, whereof they have been convinced, not
only

onely by the light of the *Word*, but even by the light of *Nature*; which light is sufficient to make a discovery of some, of many finnes, specially of those against the second Table. This is the *work of the Law*, written in the hearts of men, (as the Apostle saith of it, *Rom. 2. 15.*) which whilest it directs them to many *Duties*, it cannot but convince them of many *Sinnes*. *Rectum est index sui & obliqui.* Yet, for all this, they will not be brought to a confession and acknowledgment of what they cannot but be convinced of. No, though charged upon them by the Ministers of God, again and again, yet for all that, they will not be brought to confess their finnes; no, not so much as unto God. Is it not the case of some, of many profane wretches? (I wish there may be none of them within the hearing of it, or, if there be, that it may sink into their hearts); They are such as cannot but be convinced of their sinful wayes and courses, being (as the Apostle saith of obstinate Hereticks, *Tit. 3. 11.*) *Ἀυτοκατακριτοί*, self-condemned; their own consciences bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing them, (as he speaks of the Gentiles, *Rom. 2. 15.*) their finnes being of a horrid nature, staring them in the face (as it were); yet for all that, the time is yet to come, that ever they should go into the presence of God, there to spread their finnes before

Not un-
to God.

fore him, (as *Hezekiah* did *Senacherib's* blasphemous Letter, *Isa.* 38.) to humble themselves at his footstool, by confessing and acknowledging their finnes. This is a course, a practise, which they are meer strangers to, never yet knew what it meant.

Much
less to
Men.

And not confessing their finnes unto God, they are very farre from acknowledging them unto Men; from whom their main care is to *hide* them, (as *Achan* did his *Wedge of Gold*, and *Babylonish Garment*, which he hid in his *Tent*, *Josk.* 7. 22). And if they be found out, and charged upon them, What do they then? Why either deny them, (as *Gebazi* did his running after *Naman* to receive a reward from him, which his Master *Elisha* had refused; when his master asked him, *Whence comest thou?* he said, *Thy servant went no whither*, 2 *King.* 5. 25.) so adding sinne unto sinne. Or else excuse, it may be defend, what they have done. By no means they will be brought to take the blame and shame of Sinne to themselves. Let such take notice how farre they are from *Paul's* disposition, who upon all occasions shews himself forward, and ready, to confess and acknowledge against himself his former finnes; that so, taking shame to himself, he might give Glory to God. Never was he more ready to take unto himself the praise of his good deeds when he was a *Pharisee*, than now
he

he is to take both the *blame* and *shame* of his *evil ones*, being a *Christian*. Certainly the Soul that will not be brought to the confessing, and acknowledging of those finnes whereof it is convinced, must needs be in a state of Impenitency, lying under the power, and guilt of sinne.

A third sort there are, (I shall hasten what I may) who it may be at some times, and upon some occasions, will confess and acknowledge their finnes; but their acknowledgements are not *sincere*, but *hypocritical*, and counterfeit. And such they will appear to be, if brought to the *Test*, tryed by the Touchstone of that five-fold Property which I have held forth to you.

1. Either they are not *Voluntary*, and free, but extorted. They will not confess but when they are brought to the *Rack*; never but when they are in some Strait, having some Judgement of God lying upon them, or threatening them. Then, it may be, God and Men shall hear of them, and from them, then they will confess against themselves. Whereas at other times they are wholly silent in this way.

2. Or else (in the second place) there is no *ingenuity* in their Confessions. And thence is it, that, if they be drawn to confess, and acknowledge ought against themselves, they deal very partially, hiding their finnes

3.
Such as
confess,

but not
truly.

False
Confessi-
on tried
by a five-
fold
Touch-
stone.

They are
not vo-
luntary,
but ex-
torted.

Not in-
genuous,
but par-
tial.

finnes what they may, seeking to excuse, colour, extenuate, shift them off to others (as you have heard) not willing to lay them forth open and naked, and so to deal plainly either with God or Man. Still they will be keeping back part.

Only general.

3. Or (thirdly) their Confessions are only in the gross, in a *general way*, without any distinct reflection upon any particular sins, which draws from them that acknowledgement.

Verbal, and formal.

4. Or (in the fourth place) they are merely *verbal*, and *formal*, without any true inward sense and feeling of the sinnes which they confess, and acknowledge.

In a despairing way.

5. Or else (in the last place) what they do, is altogether in a *despairing way*, without either sense, or hope of Mercy.

All these (as I have shoven you) they are evidences of a false and counterfeit Acknowledgment. And yet such, and no better, are the Confessions which the greatest part (it is to be feared) do rest contented with. Never regarding to get their hearts brought to such a *voluntary, ingenuous, particular, cordial, and filial* Acknowledgment, as might evidence to themselves, and others, the truth of their Repentance.

4. Such as in stead of Confessing, make Profession of their sins, boasting in them.

There is yet a fourth sort, and that is the worst of all, such as will make *Confession* (or rather *Profession*) of their sinnes, but not as *sinnes*; not confessing them with sor-

row and shame, with indignation and detestation, with a serious purpose and resolution of forsaking and abandoning of them, (as the true Penitent doth) but rather boasting of them, and glorying in them. I wish there were none such to be found among Christians at this day; such as glory in their finnes; which they shew not, as *Beggars* do their *Soars*, to move pity and compassion in the Beholders, but as *Souldiers* do their *Wounds* and *Skars* which they have received in some honourable Service; accounting it their Honour, their Glory, that they have been the *cheif* of sinners. Such monsters of Men there have been, and I fear yet are, men so hardned in their sinful wayes and courses; so far given over to that *ῥῆς ἀνομίας*, to a *Reprobate minde*, (as the Apostle saith of the *Gentiles*, Rom. 1. 28.) so far *past all sense and feeling*, (as he saith of some, *Ephes. 4. 19.*) as that they are not ashamed to declare their finnes. *They declare their sinne as Sodom* (as the Prophet saith of the People of the *Jews*, Isa. 3. 9.): Making their boast thereof, as those *Idolaters* did of their *Idols*, Psal. 97. 7. And as *Lamech* did of his Cruelty and Bloodshed, *Gen. 4. 23, 24.* Yea, it may be, boast of that which they never did. Surely, a greater height of impiety, than is to be found in the Devils Kingdom, in *Hell* itself. There, those damned Souls, they com-

 Damned
 Souls, far
 from
 such
 plaine boasting.

plaine and cry out of their finnes, and curse the time that ever they committed them. As for boasting of them, glorying in them, they are far from it. Now, as for such, let them know, that this their boasting, their glorying, (shall I speak it in the Apostle's Language to his *Corinthians* in another case, 1 Cor. 5. 6.) *ἐκαλόν*, it is not good? Nay, it is most horrid, most impious. Such an impiety as hath a woe, a most dreadful woe attending upon it. (Hear, and tremble at it, you, who stand in any degree guilty in this kind). *They declare their sinne as Sodom, and they hide it not*, (saith the Prophet, speaking of the *Jews* in the Text forecited, Isa. 3. 9. As they shewed it in their *deeds*, so they spared not to publish it with their *tongues*, not in way of *confession*, as *David*, Psal. 32. 5. but in a way of *profession* as *Lamech*, Gen. 4. 23, 24. (as our new Annotator explains it). Thus did they declare their finnes as *Sodom*, as the men of *Sodom*; who openly professed, what they commonly practised or intended. But what follows? *Wee unto their souls, for they have rewarded evil to themselves*: By these wicked courses, they draw down the Vengeance of God upon their own heads. Oh, far be this from any one of us! The shameful parts of the body, nature teacheth to hide and cover them. If any shall be so immodest as to discover them to open view,

view, we should presently conclude him to be either mad or drunk, not himself. What is it then to uncover the nakedness, and filthiness of the Soul? And not onely to uncover it, but to boast of it, to glory in it. As for such, well may we say of them, what the Apostle doth of those voluptuous belly Gods, Phil. 3. 19. that *their glory is their shame*. So is it now, and so they shall find it another day, at that great day, when (as he there saith of them) *Destruction shall be their end*. Paul, confessing his sinnes here in the Text, he doth it openly, before God and Men, but he doth it upon another account, viz. That he might take the shame of them to himself.

And herein propound we him, as a *Pattern for our Imitation*. Be we all of us such *Confessors*, ready and forward upon all occasions, to confess and acknowledg our sins, as he was. Let that be the word of *Exhortation*, which (as in the former *Branch*) might be directed to two sorts of persons; First, to such as never yet knew, what a true confession and acknowledgment of sinnes meant. Secondly, to such as have been practisers in this way. But I shall put them both together, pressing this duty upon all. Those which never yet did it, let them set upon it. Those who have done it, let them be frequent in it. This is that, which the Lord calleth for from his people, the people

Use. 2.

All Exhorted,
to be
such Confessours as
Paul was

ple of the *Jews*, Jer. 3. 13. *Onely acknowledge thine iniquity.* And this he expecteth and looketh for, at the hands of all those, that look for mercy from him; that they should confesse and acknowledg their iniquities. And this do we all, and every of us. Sure I am, there is none of us but have just cause to do it. Though we be not so great sinners as *Paul* was, yet sinners we are, and great sinners, all of us. And so looking upon our selves, *confesse we our finnes.*

1.
Confessing unto
God.

This do we (in the first place) unto God. This is the *confession*, which Scripture most urgeth and calleth for, at the hands of all, as being the most necessary confession. *My Son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him,* (saith *Joshua* to *Achan*) Josh. 7. 19. *I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,* (saith *David*, Psal. 32. 5.) Confession unto others, it may be at some times, and in some cases, useful, and profitable, but this, at all times necessary. A Doctrine, far differing from that of the Church of *Rome*; which runneth almost wholly, upon another kind of *confession*, viz. *Auricular confession* (as they call it) confession made in the ears of the *Priest*. This is the Confession which they so much cry up, making it a main part of their Religion; insisting so much upon it in all their Tracts and Catechisms, calling,

Auricular Con-
fession
nor ne-
cessary.

ling, and accounting it a *Sacrament*, and making it one of the Essential parts of true *Repentance*, imposing it strictly upon All, and requiring it as a matter, not only of Expedience, but of absolute Necessity, (where it may be done); without which, no man can receive Absolution, or Remission of his Sinnes, or have any entrance into the Kingdom of God. In this, the Doctrine of our Church, is (and may it ever so be) far dissonant from, and contrarie to theirs. Which, however in some cases it alloweth, and upon good grounds, approveth the *Confession of sinnes* unto the Ministers of God, as expedient and useful; yet, *Confession unto God*, and onely that, it holdeth to be of absolute Necessity. And so looking upon it, let every of us thus confesse our sinnes; confesse them unto Him. Which do we, in *Publick*, in *Private*; doing it in such a manner, as it may be acceptable unto Him, and profitable to our selves. To which end, have we an eye to that fivefold *Property* which I mentioned before.

1. See that our Confession be *Voluntary* and *Free*. Bring we our hearts willingly to the work. See that our Confession come from us, like *Water* out of a *Spring*; not like *Water* out of a *Still*, which is forced by fire. Not deferring, and putting it off till the Evil day. Better do it now, than

stay till God bring us to the *Rack*, and so extort a confession from us. Extorted confessions, being (as I said) ever suspicious, they will yield little comfort to the Soul: What herein we do, do it willingly.

Ingen-
nuous.

2. And (2dly.), do it *Ingenously*. Acknowledge we our finnes unto God, and hide them not. A bootlesse and vain attempt, to go about to hide our finnes from him, in whole, or in part, *before whose Eyes, all things are naked and open*, (as the Apostle tells us, *Heb. 4. 13.*). In our Confessions therefore, deal plainly and openly with him, Shewing our selves as ready to confess our finnes unto him, as we would be to receive mercy from him. Do it ingenuously and fully.

Particu-
lar.

3. And do it *Particularly*, not resting contented with an *Implicit Confession*, which (as one saith) is little better than an *Implicit Faith*; not thinking it enough, to confess and acknowledge that we are sinners, great sinners; but deal particularly and distinctly, producing our particular finnes, laying them before the Lord, specially the chief of them.

Cordial.

4. And (in the 4th. place) do it *Cordially*. Let our Confessions, be not onely *Tongue*, but *Heart-Confessions*. See that we be inwardly affected with the sense and feeling of those sins which we confess.

Filial.

5. And (in the last place) let our Confessions

sions be *Filial*, come we unto God, not onely as a *Judge*, but as a *Father*; laying hold upon his Mercy in Christ, for the pardon of those finnes which we confesse. Thus, confesse we our finnes unto God.

To excite and stir us up whereunto, ^{Motive.} take we notice, that this is *the way to mercy*. ^{This the only and sure way} The onely way, and the sure way to it. ^{to obtain Mercy.} Scripture is expresse for both. The *onely* way, *I am merciful* (saith the Lord), *onely* *acknowledge thine iniquitie*, Jer. 3. 12, 13. as if he had said, Other way there is none for thee, or any other, to obtain Mercy at my hands, but this. The *sure way*. So much these promises import: *He that confesseth, and forsaketh his finnes, shall have mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. *If we confess our finnes, God is faithful and just to forgive us our finnes, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, 1 Joh. 1. 9. God having (as it were) bound himself by Promise, upon *Confession* of finnes, to bestow *Remission*; now, it standeth not onely with his *Mercy*, but with his *Justice* to do it. Not that confession can merit pardon at the hands of God, more than at the hands of men, but onely in regard of His gracious promise, which having made, he will be faithful in the performance of. This is the way, the sure and onely way to find Mercy. A way, which God himself hath layed out; and a way

This, the
ready &
only way
to ease
the heart

which his people have ever taken for the obtaining of it, both for themselves and others; and away, wherein they have ever found what they sought for. All these I might shew you, if need were. And besides this, I might shew you diverse other benefits, redounding to the penitent sinner from this practise. This is the ready and onely way to ease the heart, being burdened with sinne, thus, to poure it forth before God, in such humble and hearty confessions and acknowledgments. The opening of our grief unto a friend, is an ease to the heart, much more to do it unto God. *When I kept silence, (saith David) my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long,* Psal. 32.3. Whilest he hid his sinne, he could have no rest; he roared through pangs of Conscience: but, confessing it, his Soul was quieted; he thereby obtained what he then sought for, Pardon and Remission; *I said, I will confesse my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquitie of my sinne,* (so it foiloweth) vers. 5. Let these Motives induce us to be willing to confess our sinnes unto God.

2. And (2dly.), upon occasion, be not unwilling to do it unto Men. 1st. *Privately*, whether to the *Ministers* of God or others. *Confess your sinnes one to another,* (saith Saint James, Jam. 5. 16.) that is (say some), to those *Elders* which were to be sent for, of whom

whom he speaks in the verses foregoing, or (as others more generally look upon it) to them, or any other faithful Brethren. This are Christians to do (as I have shoven you) in two cases. 1st. When they feel sinne lying heavy upon their Souls, and find no ease by other endeavours. And (2dly.), when any sinne is charged upon them by others, by way of Christian Admonition or Reprehension. In these cases, Christians are to deal freely and ingenuously, confessing their sinnes unto others, such as may be fit to have them Communicated to them, being Wise and Faithful. By which means, they may come to have the benefit, as of their *Counsels*, so of their *Prayers*. *Confess your sinnes one to another, and pray one for another, (as it there followeth).*

2. And as *Privately*, so also *Publickly*, *Openly* and *Openly*; whether it be in a *regular way*, if justly required so to do by Lawful Authority; or in a *Spontaneous and Voluntary* way. Such as have been open, and scandalous Sinners, sinning before others, to the offending, or endangering of them, let them be, as occasion is offered, ready to confesse their sinnes before others. That so

1. They may *give Glory to God*, (as *Joshua* in the Text fore-cited requires *Achan* to do); the glory of his *Justice*, acknowledging him to be *Just*, and *Righteous*, That they may give glory to God.

in what ever he hath done, or shall do against them, though it were in their everlasting condemnation. *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee*, (so Daniel begins his Confession) *Dan. 9. 7.* And so the glory of his *Grace* and *Mercy*, in sparing them, receiving them to Mercy. Upon this ground it was, (as I have shown you) that *Paul* was so forward, and frequent in his Confessions.

Take
shame to
them-
selves.

2. And (secondly) that giving glory to God, they may take *shame to themselves*. *O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face* (so Daniel there goeth on). This (as I have shoven you) true Penitent sinners will readily take unto themselves; and upon this account they are so ready to make these Open confessions. That which deterrs, and keeps off others from it, brings them off to it. Carnal men, out of a carnal respect which they have to their credit and reputation in the World, they are averse to it. And hereupon they will stand upon their Justification, Denying, Excusing, Extenuating, Evading what they can, (as you have heard). But upon this accompt, the penitent sinner is forward in it, that, whilest he gives glory to God, he may take shame to himself. This is God's due, and his; and so apprehending it, he is willing thus to give the one, and take the other.

3. And

3. And again (thirdly), This let them do, for the satisfaction of those, whom by their finnes they have scandalized, and offended, or endangered.

Give Satisfaction to those, whom they have offended or endangered.

4. As also to set a Patern unto others, who stand guilty of the like finnes. All these, let them be as so many inducements, to draw them to such free and open Confessions.

Wherein, let them take heed that they deal *sincerely* and *uprightly*. Not doing this out of any base sinister respects, as thinking thereby, to gain credit and repute from any, which is odious Hypocrisy. But doing it, as in the presence of God. Thus did *Paul preach the Gospel of Christ*, (as he tells his *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 2. last.). And thus no question he made these *open confessions against himself*, *Not as many, who deal deceitfully, but as of sincerity, as in the sight of God*. And such let all our confessions and acknowledgments be; to whomsoever they are made, whether to God or Man. See that they be not meerly verbal and formal, much less Hypocritical, but Sincere and Cordial.

Herein to deal sincerely

And that we may attain to be such true confessors, (to give you some directions briefly); Let our first work be, to get a true sight, a right knowledge of sin, a speculative knowledge of the nature, and kinds of sin, sinne.

Dir. I. Get a general knowledg of sinne.

to know what sinne is, and what is sinne. Now, this knowledge is not to be attained, but by and from the *Law*. By the *Law*, is the knowledge of sinne, (saith the Apostle) Rom. 3. 20. *ἐπίγνωσις*, a clear, distinct, effectual knowledge, such a knowledg as bringeth forth an Acknowledgment. So much the word in the Original is conceived to import, which we find sometimes so rendred by our Translators, as, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. *Tit.* 1. 1. *Acknowledgment*. Now, such a knowledge of sinne, [as I said] is not to be attained, but by the *Law*, from the *Word*. As for the *light of nature*, that may, and will discover unto man some sinnes, but this light is insufficient and defective. For, [1st.], it will not discover *all sinnes*. Sinnes against the *Second Table* it may, but not so many of them against the *First Table*; which are indeed the greatest sinnes. *Grosse* sinnes it may, not other. *Actual* sinnes it may, which are the *Branches*; but not *Original* sinne, which is the *Root* of all sinne. This through-discovery of all sinne, is onely by the *Law*. And therefore saith the Apostle, *I had not known sinne, but by the Law*, Rom. 7. 7. *Non ita exacte nossem*, [saith Grotius], I could never have known it so exactly and fully, as now I do. Many sinnes there were, that the light of nature could not have discovered unto him: Specially that *Mother-Sinne*, the *Root* of all Sinne, that sinful

Concupi-

Concupiscence, of which he speaks in the words following, *I had not known lust*, (*ἐπιθυμίαν*, *Concupiscence*), except the Law had said, *Thou shalt not lust*. Besides, finnes against the Gospel, (such as Pauls finnes were, which here he confesseth), the light of Nature cannot discover them; this must the light of the Word do. And again, discovery of sinne by the light of nature, is not an effectual discovery. It never so enlightneth the eye, as that it rightly affecteth the heart, affecteth it with true sorrow for sinne, so as to drive the sinner unto God, to seek and sue for Mercy, in such a way as he may obtain it. This is proper to the Word. And therefore make we use of this Light, labouring to get a true understanding of, and insight into, the Law of God, that so we may attain such a knowledge of sinne, to know (as I said), what finnes are, and what is sinne. Without this, there will be no true Confession. *Γνώσις* must go before *ἐπίγνωσις*, *Cognitio* before *Agnitio*, *Knowledge* before *Acknowledgement*.

2dly. Having attained some measure of this general knowledge, the next work must be, to get a particular Conviction. Paul had not onely a light shining round about him, (as you heard), but he also heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me*, Act. 9. And so it is

2.
A particular Conviction.

is not enough for a Christian to have the light of the Word shining round about him, to have a general knowledge of sinne, but he must be particularly convinced of his own finnes. To that end, therefore, bring we our selves to the *Law*. Behold we our own *faces* in that *Glass*. Bring our *lives* thither, bring our *hearts* thither, comparing the one with the other; laying both to that *Rule*, that so by the straightness of the one, we may discover the obliquity and crookedness of the other. Thus did *Paul*, he brought himself, his heart and life to the *Law*, and by that means, he came not onely to attain the knowledge of sinne in a general way, but to see his own sinfulness, the sinfulness of his Nature, and the sinfulness of his Life; as his former finnes acted before his Conversion, so the *Body of sinne*, which still remained in him. In the sense and apprehension whereof, he so passionately cryeth out in the close of that Chapter, *Rom. 7. 24.* *ταλαίπωρος ἑγὼ ἄνθρωπος, O wretched man that I am, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Thus, seek we after such a *Conviction*, which till we attain, we will never be brought to a right confession and acknowledgment of sin. Thence was it, that *Nathan* taketh this course with *David*: First, convincing him of his sinne, which he doth, by propounding to him the Parable of the *Ewe-Lamb*,
and

and so by that means, brings him to that Confession which there he made,
2 Sam. 12.

3dly. Being convinced of sinne, then (in the third place) seek after some measure of *Compunction* and *Contrition*, that so we may not onely have a sight, but an inward sense and feeling of our sinnes, and so be humbled in the sense of them. *Paul*, did not only see a light shining about him, and hear a voice speaking unto him, but he was also struck to the ground, [as you have heard]. And so must a poor sinner be, before ever he will be brought to a right confession of his sinnes. Seek we for this also in measure. This it was, that drew *John the Baptist's*, and *Peters*, and *Pauls* hearers, to those open confessions which they made, they were pricked in the hearts for their sinnes.

4thly. Being thus humbled for sinne, and feeling some measure of *Compunction*, now labour in the next place, to get some apprehensions of mercy, to raise up the Soul; if not in the sense, yet with the hope of Mercy. Till this be done, our confession will never be such as it ought to be. It will never be *Voluntary* and *Ingenuous*, till it be *Filial*. Fear, slavish fear, it straitneth the heart, causeth the spirits to retire, and run inward [as it were]. Apprehensions of Mercy, will melt, and enlarge, and dissolve it [as it were]; and so draw forth the Soul, to

3.
Com-
punction
and Con-
trition.

4.
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sion of
Mercy.

to free and ingenuous confessions, and acknowledgments.

5.
Begg
from
God, his
free Spir
rit.

5thly. In the fifth and last place, seek we unto God for that his free *Spirit*, [as *David* calleth it, *Psal.* 51. 12.] that, That may be in us a *spirit of confession*. It is that, which the Lord maketh promise of to his people, *Zach.* 12. 10. *I will poure upon them, the Spirit of Grace and Supplications*. His *Spirit*, which is the gift of his Grace, [and therefore called the *Spirit of Grace*] should so inwardly affect them with the sense of his Mercies, as that they should freely poure out their Souls before Him, in true penitent confessions of their own finnes, whereof formerly they had not been sensible. And this *Spirit* seek we from God. Even such a *Spirit of Grace and Supplications*, which may put our hearts into such a confessing frame and temper, as that they may be ready upon all occasions, to break forth into humble and hearty confessions and acknowledgments of our finnes, both before God and Men. By this means it was, that *Paul* was now become such a forward and ingenuous confessor of his own finnes. Which, confessing, he also *censureth*, and that *severely*, acknowledging himself not only a sinner, but a great sinner; yea, *the chief of sinners*. That is the third particular *Branch*, of the general *Observation*, to which I now come.

The

THe Penitent sinner, as he is a frequent Branch 3.
 Remembrancer, and a forward Confessor, The Pe-
 so also a severe Censurer; severe in censu- nitent
 ring of his own Sinnes, and himself for sinner, a
 them. An Observation which I find the severe
 learned Grotius taking up from that pa- Censurer
 rallel Text, Luk. 5. 8. where Peter maketh of him-
 the like Confession, that Paul here doth. self.
 Having seen that Miracle which Christ had
 wrought, in blessing his labour beyond all
 expectation, giving him such a draught of
 Fishes, as the like he had never before seen
 or heard of, he thereupon falleth down at
 his knees, saying, Depart from me, I am a sin-
 ful man. Ἀμαρτωλός, Peccatorus, a sinner, a
 great sinner. So much that word [as you
 have formerly heard] imports; as we may
 take notice from that Text of Saint Peter,
 1 Pet. 4. 18. If the righteous scarcely be saved,
 where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?
 ὁ ἀσεβὴς καὶ ἁμαρτωλός. Where the word
 sinner, being opposed to a Righteous person,
 it imports, a wicked and ungodly person,
 with whom it is there joyned, an habitu-
 ated sinner. So we find it used by our A-
 postle in the ninth verse of this Chapter,
 whereof the Text is part. Where he saith,
 that the Law was not made for a righteous man,
 but for the lawless and disobedient; for the
 un-

ungodly, and for sinners, for unholy, and prophane. Where, by sinners, we are to understand; such as the rest there spoken of are, wicked, and ungodly; unholy, and prophane persons, such as make a trade of sinne, (as Beza there expounds it), *Veluti aliquam peccandi artem exercentes*, such as the Poet Hesiod (saith he) calleth, *κακῶν ἐκπληγῆς*, such as made sinne their work, habituated and notorious sinners. Now what? Was Peter such a one? Nothing lesse, he was, then, a truly pious and godly Man, as appears by his Demeanure to his Lord and Master Christ, his readines to do what ever he should command him; which he professeth and practiseth in the verses foregoing, *vers. 5. 6.* How was it then, that he should passe so severe a Censure upon himself, that he was a sinner, such a sinner, *a sinful man*? Why, thus it is, *none are more ready to pass censures upon themselves, than those that deserve them least.* *Probi animi vel maximum est indicium severissimam in se censuram exercere*, (saith that Author); There is not a greater Evidence of a Pious and Gracious Soul, than to be severe in Censuring of it self. Such a one was this our Apostle Saint Paul, (as the same Author there taketh notice of it, paralleling him with Peter, in this confession which here he maketh). Notwithstanding that before his Conversion, he was morally blameless in his life and

conversation, and now an eminent Saint; yet he passeth this Censure upon himself, that he was, τὸν ἀμαρτωλὸν πρῶτος, the first, the chief of Sinners.

And such Censurers shall we find other of the Saints of God to have been, severe in censuring of themselves. Hence is it, that in their Confessions and Acknowledgements we shall find them aggravating their sinnes to the heighth, endeavouring what they could to express and set forth the Heinousness, the Greatness of them. So we find *David* confessing and acknowledging of that sinne of his, in Numbering of the People, 2 Sam. 24. 10. His heart smiting him for what he had done, he breaks forth into the Acknowledgement of it, confessing that he had therein not onely sinned, but greatly sinned.

And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly in that I have done. And what was it that he had done? Why, he had caused the People, through his Dominions, to be numbered; to have a Muster-rolle taken of all those that were fit to bear Armes, if occasion should require it. And what, Was this so great a Sinne? In appearance it was not, it being no more than what, out of a Politick respect, he might do; and what others before him (in likely-hood) had frequently and usually done. But *David*,
know-

knowing his own heart, and being privy to his own intentions and aimes in doing what he did; that he had done it, not onely out of a Vain curiosity, when as there was no need that he should do it, but also out of a principle of Pride, and carnal confidence, having therein made flesh his Arm, trusting in the Multitude of his People; hereupon he not onely confesseth the sinne, but censurcth it as a very great sinne; withall censuring himself to have therein done foolishly, very foolishly, as it followeth in the close of that Verse, *I have done very foolishly*. However, in this action, I seemed to myself to have been very prudent and politick; yet now I see that it was no better than extream folly, seeing I swerved out of the way of thy Commandements, through pride, and carnal confidence.

And not unlike is that other confession of his, which he maketh in the matter of *Uriah*, *Psal. 51*. where he not onely in expresse tearms acknowledgeth the Fact which he had done, his *going into Bathsheba*, (as he calleth it in the Title of the Psalme) his committing Adultery with her; but he aggravateth it to the full, setting forth the Foulness and Heinousness of it, which he doth by multiplying of words about it, calling it *Iniquity*, *Transgression*, *Sinne*, *Evil*; an exaggeration

geration of words, serving and tending to the aggravation of his sinne. Withal, he accuseth and condemneth himself before God, for that sinne, clearing, and justifying of him, as touching what he had already done, in taking away his *Child*; so also, touching what he had threatned by the Prophet *Nathan*, that he would do unto him, viz. That, *the Sword should never depart from his house*, 2 Sam. 12. 10. And so touching whatsoever else he should please to do unto him, however he should punish him or his, yet, still he acknowledgeth, how he had deserved all, justifying of God. This we shall find in the fourth verse of that Psalm; where confessing how he had therein sinned against God, *Against thee, thee onely have I sinned, and done this evill in thy sight*; he subjoyneth, *That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest*. Which words are commonly (and I think not amiss) looked upon as a Reason, why he thus made this confession to his God, viz. That he might give unto him the glory of his Justice; in what ever he had spoken and threatned against him, or in what ever judgments and punishments, he should lay and inflict upon him. Such a severe Censurer was David of his own sinnes, and of himself for them.

And the like shall we find in diverse others; As in *Daniel*, who confessing his own,

and the peoples finnes, *Dau. 9.* he first aggravateth them, to that end, multiplying of words, (as *David* there did), making use of variety of expressions, *Verf. 5.* *We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, &c.* thereby, setting forth both the multitude and magnitude of their finnes. Then he censures himself, and them for them, acknowledging what they had justly deserved thereby, even shame and confusion of face; *O Lord* (saith he), *righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day, v. 7.* which he repeats again in the verse following, with some amplifications. *O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our Kings, to our Princes, and to our Fathers, because we have sinned against thee.*

Such a confession of sinne it is that King *Solomon* prescribes unto all penitent sinners, *1 King. 8. 47.* *If they shall repent, and make supplication unto thee, saying, We have sinned, and done perversly, we have committed wickedness, &c.* As if he should say, We cannot sufficiently expresse, how heinous our sins are. And such confession, being truly penitent, they will be ready to make, We see it in the *Prodigal*, upon his return to his Father, *Luk. 15. 21.* *Father* (saith he), *I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* Where see, how he first aggravateth his fault, acknowledge-

knowledging that in what he had done, he had sinned against *Heaven*, that is, against God, who dwelleth in the Heavens; not onely against his earthly Father, whom he had immediately offended, by his lewd and extravagant courses, but also against his Heavenly Father, whose Laws he had transgressed. Then he passeth Censure upon himself, adjudging and acknowledging himself, worthy to be cast off by his Father, unworthy to be any longer owned by him, as his Son, *I am no more worthy to be called thy Son*. So far was he from excusing himself, or from any wayes mincing, or extenuating what he had done. What ever others might think of it, who might impute it to the levities of his youth, and so make leight of it, he censures it, and himself for it, as deserving not onely a frown, or a check from his Father, but an utter abdication and abjection. So severe will true Penitents be, in Censuring of their own sinnes, and themselves for them. Looking upon themselves as vile unworthy wretches. So did *Job*, *Bekold, I am vile*, (saith he) *Job* 40. 4. He was so, in his own eyes. *Abhorring themselves*, (as he saith afterward of himself, cap. 42. vers. 6.) *Loathing themselves in their own sight, for all the evils which they have done*, (as the Lord saith his people should do, *Ezek.* 20. 43. & 36. 31.) viler than others. *Surely I am more*

brutish than any man, (saith wise Agur), Prov. 30. 2. Thus severe are penitent sinners, in censuring of themselves.

Quest. Q. And how is it that they are so?

A. To this I have (as I remember) returned some answer before, giving you the heads of some Reasons for it. Let me touch upon some of them again.

Resp. 1. 1st. *They are best acquainted with themselves,* they know themselves. *Know ye not your own selves,* (saith Paul to his *Corinthians*) 2 Cor. 13. 5. This, all Regenerate Persons in measure do. Having their eyes opened to the beholding, as of what they are by Grace, to which end the Spirit is given them (*we have received the Spirit of God, that we should know the things which are freely given us of God, 1 Cor. 2. 12.*); so of what they are by Nature, to the beholding of the corruption of their hearts, and the errors of their lives. These they know. *Our transgressions are with us, and our iniquities we know them,* (saith the Church) Isa. 59. 12. And so know them, as they do not, cannot, know the sinnes of others. In themselves (as you heard before) they take notice of the *body of sinne*, the mass of sinful corruption which is in them, which in others they see not, but by reflecting upon themselves. Thus they may see it. *Even as in water, face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man,* (saith Solomon) Prov. 27. 19.

With his
own
Heart.

The

The face which a man seeth in the water, or in a glass, it is in all points like unto his own, of the same feature, colour, complexion. Even such a similitude there is between the hearts, of one man, and another. How ever Grace maketh a change, making men *new Creatures*, differing from themselves, and so from others; yet, by nature there is no difference, as the Apostle tells us, *Rom. 3. 22.* ἡ γὰρ ἐστὶ διουολη, *There is no difference (or distinction), all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God.* That is, (as some expound it, and as we find these words [*the Glory of God*] used by the same Apostle, *1 Cor. 11. 7.*) having all alike sinned in *Adam*, they are alike deprived of the *Image of God*, wherein man was at the first Created, consisting in Holiness and Righteousnes; and consequently, all alike infected with *Original Corruption*, which is the *Image of Satan*, all alike disfigured and deformed. So as a man reflecting upon himself, he thereby cometh, after a sort, to see what is in another, *Ex suo ingenio aliorum ingenia estimans*, measuring others by himself, guessing at their Corruption by his own. But this he seeth onely in a *Glass*, by reflexion from his own heart, and consequently his knowledg hereof is not so clear and certain, as that which he hath of himself. As for his own corruption, that he is well acquainted with, being sensible how indi-

posed he is to what ever is good, how prone to all manner of evil.

With his own life. And as he knoweth his own heart, better than he doth the heart of any other, so also his *life*, as his inward Corruption which is the Fountain, so his actual sinnes which are the Streams. These he knoweth better than he doth the sinnes of any others. Many sins he must take notice of in others, but of more in himself. *Mine iniquities are more than the hairs of my head*, (saith David) Psal. 40. 12. This a man may say of himself, rather than of another, being (as the Penitent sinner is) a diligent and constant observer of himself, observing his daily slips and infirmities, his daily commissions and omissions, which he cannot do in another. In others, he taketh notice onely of their *open* sinnes, in himself, of his *secret* sinnes; which, as they are more in number, so they may be more heinous in nature than the open sinnes of others. And besides, observing his own sinnes, he knoweth the nature and quality of them, better than he can do of the sins of others. In others, he taketh notice of the outward *Acts* of such or such sinnes, seeing them, or hearing of them; but in himself, he taketh notice also of the *circumstances* accompanying his own sinnes, which many times exceedingly do aggravate them. So as where- as he doth burgesse at the greatness of other mens sinnes, judging them by the outward appear-

The pe-
nitent
sinner
weigh-
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own sins.

appearance, he Weigheth his own. Even as the Lord is said to weigh the wayes of men, Isa. 26. 7. *Thou most upright dost weigh the path of the just.* Pondering all their goings, (as the *Wiseman* saith of him), Prov. 5. 21. *The wayes of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.* Taking exact notice of all their *Actions*, weighing them, as *Hannah* hath it in her Song, 1 Sam. 2. 3. *The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed.* And as their *Actions*, so their *Hearts* and *Spirits*. *The Lord weigheth the Spirits* (saith the *Wiseman*), Prov. 16. 2. repeated, cap. 21. 2. Like as the *Goldsmith* that weigheth his Gold, he taketh exact notice of every grain; so doth God ponder and weigh all the actions, words, and thoughts of Men, as their good works, so their sinnes; taking notice of every circumstance that may make them either lighter or heavier, extenuate or aggravate them. And thus doth the true penitent sinner desire to weigh and ponder his own sinnes, considering not onely the sinnes themselves, but the circumstances wherewith they are attended, which oft-times are great aggravations. And so by putting these grains into his own ballance, which he cannot do in anothers, his own sinnes in his apprehension, come to weigh down the sinnes of others; though haply in themselves not so heavy as others. Thus is he better acquainted with

himself than with others, with his own heart and life, with his own finnes, his own inward Corruption, the pravity of his Nature, the Rebellion of his own Will, the Inordinacy of his own Affections, as also with his own actual finnes, both as to the number, and nature of them. And hence is it, that he cometh to be so censorious towards himself, judging his own finnes more, and greater than the finnes of others; and so himself, a greater finner than others.

Resp. 2.
He feel-
eth them

Besides this, (in the second place) as he seeth and weigheth his own finnes, so he *feelet*h them; Which he doth not the finnes of others. The finnes of others he taketh notice of by the Eye, or Ear; either by hear-say, or at the most being an eye-witness of them, and so knoweth them onely by speculation, but his own finnes he feeleth them. Feeling the *Body of sinne* stirring in him, even as *Rebecca* felt the two twins stirring and striving in her Womb, *Gen. 25. 22.* thus doth he feel Corruption striving and struggling with Grace (of which *Paul* complains, *Rom. 7.*) Besides, he feeleth his *Actual finnes*, which, it may be, lye heavy upon his Soul. As *David* saith his finnes did upon him. *Psal. 40. 12.* *Mine iniquities* (saith he) *have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up;* which may be understood, not onely of the

the Judgements of God, which then lay upon him, whereof his finnes were the cause, but even of his finnes themselves, which lay heavy upon his Soul. And so is it in measure with all true Penitent sinners, they are such as either do feel, or have felt the weight and burden of their finnes, being *weary, and heavy laden* with them, as our Saviour giveth a Character of them. *Mat. 11. 29.* *οἱ κοπιῶντες, καὶ περισπῶντες*, such as labour under the sense of sinne, feeling it lying upon them as an intolerable burden. And this again maketh them think their own sins greatest. So it did *Paul* here (as you have heard). He saw and heard of the finnes of others, but they did not lie upon him as his own did, and therefore he judgeth himself to be the *chief of sinners*. *Cuique gravissimum est onus quod suis impositum est humeris*, (saith *Aretius* forecited, upon the Text). Every one is ready to think that burden heaviest that lieth upon his own shoulders, and his own pain to be the greatest. See if there be any sorrow like my sorrow, (saith the Church in the Text forecited), *Lam. 1. 12.* That which a man knoweth by sense and feeling, it maketh a deeper impression upon his heart, than what he knoweth onely by Speculation.

Many other Reasons might be given, why penitent sinners should have such apprehensions

Resp. 3.
His heart
is tender

sions of their own finnes. Among other, *their hearts are tender*, as *Huldah* the Prophetesse said of good *Josiah*, 2 Chron. 34. 27. *Because thine heart was tender*, &c. And such in measure is the heart of every truly penitent sinner. Now, a tender heart is affected with the least touch.

Resp. 4. Besides, (as you have heard before), they are such as have begun to *taste of mercy*. Now, that maketh their finnes to appear the more sinful to them, even as the tasting of any sweet thing, will make that which is bitter, to seem more bitter. The sweetnesse of God's Grace and Mercy in Christ, being tasted by the Soul in the pardon of sinne, it maketh sinne to be the more bitter unto it. But I shall no longer dwell upon *Illustration*. That which now remains for the closing up of this point is only the *Application*, which I shall again direct as in the two former *Branches*, onely those two wayes; By way of *Conviction*, by way of *Exhortation*.

Use 1. By way of *Conviction*, divers censured to be no true penitents. In the first place by way of *Conviction*. Is this the property of a sinner truly penitent, to be so severe in censuring of his own sins, and himself for them; how many upon this ground, may justly be censured as being none of this number?

1. Such as are flatterers of themselves, whilst they are censorious of others.

mean time, they are very ready to censure others. As for others, none are more censorious of them than they, very quicksighted they are, in prying into their lives, nay into their hearts, ready to censure both, and that most severely, nay, rigidly and uncharitably. Ready to pass a sharp censure upon the *moates*, the least infirmities and failings which they spie in others. And not onely censuring the *faults*, (which they do beyond all proportion of merit), but the persons also for the faults sake, condemning them for *Hypocrites*. But, in the mean time, they are gross flatterers of themselves. Not espying the beams in their own eyes, overlooking many gross evils in themselves, applauding themselves, as if all were well with them, and that there were nothing in them that should deserve a Censure. Such were the *Pharisees* of old, none more ready to censure others than they. So did he the *Publican* in the Gospel, blessing God, that himself was not such a one as he, and others were. *God I thank thee, (saith he) I am not as other men are, &c. or even as this Publican,* Luk. 18. 11. And thus is it with many, too many, they are very quicksighted towards others. As it is observed of the most ravenous and mischievous birds, birds of prey, they are usually most quicksighted: So is it with the worst and wickedest of men, none more ready to find fault with others, whilest they

they see none in themselves. Now as for such, let them take notice how far they are from the temper and disposition of this our *Apostle* here in the Text. *Paul*, whilest he was *Saul a Pharisee*, no question he thought as well of himself as any other, he was then, highly opinionated of his own Righteousness, that he was not as others; if a sinner, yet not so great a sinner as others were. But now being brought home to Christ, and having his eyes opened, he cometh to see more evil in himself, then in any other; whereupon he passeth this severe censure upon himself, that he was not onely a sinner, but a great sinner, yea, *the chief of sinners*. Certainly they, who do not see any thing in themselves that deserve a censure, and that a sharp one, they may well conclude, that as yet, they have not had their eyes opened, they have little or no acquaintance with themselves. Did they but thoroughly know themselves, they would see so much at home, as would make them less censorious abroad. So is it with a truly gracious Soul; a truly penitent sinner, the more holily he is, the more humble, the more gracious, the less censorious of others, where there may be any hope. The Story tells us, *Joh. 8.* of those *Scribes and Pharisees*, which brought that poor woman taken in the Act of *Adultery* before our Saviour, however, they were all of them guilty of the like, or
of

of some as great finnes as she was, as appeared by their shrinking and stealing away, after they had heard what our Saviour said to them, *He that is without sinne among you, let him first cast a stone at her*, vers. 7. Now they which heard it (saith the Text), being convicted by their own Conscience, went out one by one, vers. 9.) yet how harsh and rigid were they against her, as in accusing, so in censuring of her; urging the Law, which required that such should be stoned, which they would have speedily executed, without any further hearing. So rigid were they against her. But so was not our Saviour. However he himself knew no sinne, being free from all sinne, both Original and Actual; *holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners*, (as the Apostle saith of him), *Heb. 7. 26.* yet, see how mildely, how gently, how tenderly he was pleased to deal with her, telling her, that seeing there were no witnesses present, to prove what they charged her with, he would not condemn her, onely willing her to *go away and sinne no more*, Vers. 11. Certainly, they who are so harsh, and uncharitable, in censuring & condemning of others, either never considered, or else have forgotten, what themselves are, or were. Which if they did but seriously think of, it would teach them that Lesson which the Apostle willeth Titus to presse upon his *Cretians*, and that upon this ground, *Tit. 3. 2, 3.*

Put them in mind (saith he) to speak evil of no man, (that is, not without just cause), but to be gentle, shewing meekness unto all men; For we our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures. This would make men more severe in censuring themselves than others.

2. such as are sparing in their censuring of themselves. A second sort there are, who (it may be) will be content to pass a censure upon themselves, but they are very sparing in it. That they are sinners they will acknowledge, but what? *Great sinners?* not so, much lesse the *chief of sinners*. Here they will plead what they can for themselves, for the extenuating of their finnes, and excusing of themselves; making use of diverse *Pleas* for that end and purpose. I shall instance in three or four of the most usual.

Diverse Pleas made use of by such, for the extenuating of their finnes.

1. Others greater sinners than they. 1. Though they be sinners, and have their faults; yet, they are not such as others are. There are others as bad, nay, worse than they. And to make this good, they single out some persons grossly scandalous, comparing themselves with them, blessing God that they are not so bad as they. Thus did the *Pharisee* even now spoken of, comparing himself with the *Publican*, one of the vilest sort of persons that then were. So were the *Publicans* accounted amongst the *Jews*, being servants to the *Romans*, whose yolk the *Jews*

Jews could not endure, Officers employed by them, for the gathering in of their tribute, which they did for the most part with greatest rigour, grating upon the people, by exacting more than their due, and so making what advantage of their places they could. Hence it was that they came to be of so ill repute as they were, to be reckoned among the worst of men. Thus we find *Publicans* and *Sinners* put together, *Mat.* 9. 10, 11. And elsewhere *Publicans* and *Harlots*, *Mat.* 21. 31. intimating them to have been an infamous company. Now, with him doth the *Pharisee* there compare himself, as also with other notorious sinners. Which doing, he blesteth God that he was not so vile, as he and they. *God I thank thee, I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican*, *Luk.* 18. 11. And the like are many, very ready to plead for themselves. Comparing themselves with persons notoriously scandalous, they applaud themselves in this, that they are not so bad as they, none of the *chief of sinners*.

2d. A second Plea is, that if they be sinners, and great sinners, guilty (it may be) of some foul and scandalous finnes, yet therein they are not alone, they are but as others, they have done no otherwise then some have done before them, and others will do after them. They are flesh and blood as well as others, and therefore, if they have fallen,

2.
They are
but as
others.

fallen, they make the less of it, because it is a thing incident to all. And to this purpose, it may be, they will not spare to make use of Scripture, perverting and abusing it to their own destruction; which telleth them, how that *in many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 2. And how *the just man falleth seven times*, i. e. often, as into sufferings, so into sinnes, Prov. 24. 16. So as *there is not a just man that doeth good, and sinneth not*, Eccl. 7. 20. Withall, taking up the examples and instances of holy men, eminent Saints of God, whose sinnes stand upon Record in Scripture, some of them very foul and horrid, making use of them, if not for the excusing, yet for the extenuating of their own.

3.
They
have
sinned
through
infirmity

3. A third of these Pleas is, Though they have fallen into such and such sinnes, yet they did it not willingly, out of any love or liking they had to the sinne, but through infirmity, being, it may be, entised and drawn into it by evil company, upon whom they are willing to transference their sinnes, that they may shift them off from themselves. So *Adam* did his eating of the *Apple*, which he put upon his *Wife*, *The Woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat*, Gen. 3. 12. And so did *Saul* his sparing of *Agag*, which he putteth upon the people, (as you have heard) 1 Sam. 15. 24.

4. A fourth and a last Plea, (to name no more) is, They have fallen, and fallen foully, but they could not help it, being overpowered by Satan, whose temptations were so strong, that they could not resist them, and so they would charge the fault rather upon him, than themselves. So did the *Woman* at the first, *The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*, Gen. 3. 13. And the like do these her children, by this means, thinking at least to extenuate their sinnes, as if they in the acting and committing of them, had been onely *Instruments* and *Accessories*.

4. They could not resist Satans Temptations.

These, and many the like Pleas and pretences, do carnal men oft-times find out, making use of them, if not to defend, yet to extenuate their own sinnes, and so to excuse themselves, if not in whole yet in part; that so they may not seem so vile in their own eyes, as in truth they are. But in so doing, how unlike are they to the Apostle here in the Text? *Paul*, if he would have gone about such a work, the excusing or extenuating of his sinnes, how many Pleas might he have taken up? He was not the first Persecutor, nor the onely Persecutor, no, nor yet the greatest Persecutor. There were then others besides him, and there had been others before him, some of them as violent as ever he had been. Besides, what he had

Paul, far from making use of any such Pleas.

done, he had done it out of *Ignorance*, not knowing what he did, nor Whom it was that he opposed. Nay, what he did, he did it out of Zeal for God. Besides, in what he did against the Church, he was instigated and set on by Satan, who raised those Persecutions. And as by Satan, who had the chief hand in it, so by others his Instruments, who put him forward upon that work. But see how he layeth all these aside. However, he took notice of some, if not all of them; As of his Ignorance, *I did it Ignorantly*: And of his good Intention, *I verily thought with my self, that I ought to do many things, contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth*, A& 26. 9. Yet, he is far from making any such use of them, but he chargeth his finnes home upon himself, Censuring them, and himself for them; and that most severely, according as the nature of his finnes required, acknowledging himself, to be the *chief of sinners*.

Use. 2. And herein again, let every of us set Exhortation. Him up as a Patern for our Imitation. Let that be the Word of Exhortation, all Christians, be such self censurers of themselves, wherewith I shall conclude this point. Be we all of us *such Censurers of our selves*. As for others, take we heed of being rash and forward in censuring of them. Judge not, that ye be not judged, (saith our Saviour in his Sermon upon the Mount), *Math.*

7. 1. Which, let it be rightly and warily understood. Not but that Christians may censure the finnes of others. This, *Publick* persons not onely may do, but ought to do, both *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical*, whom God hath made *Censores morum*, Judges and Censurers of the manners of others; yea, and this may private Christians also in some cases lawfully do. In case the sinne be open and scandalous, they may censure and condemn it for a sinne in whomsoever it is, and that according to the nature of it. But being private persons, let them be sparing in censuring of the persons of others, specially in censuring them for such weakneses and infirmities as they espie in them. Taking heed of being rash, or rigid, and uncharitable in their censures of others, whether of their *Persons* or *Actions*. Here let that of the Apostle take place, *Rom. 14. 4. Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth;* which we have seconded by *Saint James*, cap. 4. vers. 12. *Who art thou that judgest another?* In judging and censuring of others, be we sparing and wary; in the mean time turning our censures upon our selves. Which, as it will be more safe, so more useful. Be we strict inquisitors into our own hearts and lives. Bring both to a scrutinie, and to a censure. And here-

in spare not to exercise our severity.

Yet, not being rash, or over-rigid in these censures. Not that I would have Christians to be *over-harsh against themselves*, so as to pass too rigid censures upon their own persons or actions. It is the *Preacher's* advice, (as you heard before), *Be not wicked over much*, Eccles. 7. 17. i. e. *judicio tuo*, - in thine own judgment. An extream, which sometimes good and gracious Souls are subject to. Out of a deep apprehension which they have of their own finnes, their weaknesses, and their wants, they are ready to passe harsh censures upon themselves, sometimes adjudging themselves to be *Hypocrites*, sometimes charging upon themselves, that great and unpardonable sinne, *the sinne against the Holy Ghost*; which notwithstanding they are very farr from, being such as desire nothing more then to hearken to the Motions and Dictates thereof. In this, Christians must be wary and tender; whilst they are not uncharitable towards others, they must take heed of being so to themselves. In the mean time, let them not forbear to judge and censure themselves, to passe censure upon their own finnes, their inward and secret corruptions, their outward and actual Transgressions, their sinful Commissions and Omissions. And herein let them be impartial, not conniving at any thing in themselves, not looking upon their own finnes through false glasses,

glasses, but beholding them as they are, let them passe a righteous judgment upon them, judging and censuring themselves for them, according to their demerit. And this let every of us be exhorted to do.

Motives hereunto take one or two instead of many. 1. This is the next, and onely *Mot. 1.* way to prevent Gods Censures. *This the way to prevent God's Censures.* If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord (saith the Apostle to his Corinthians) 1 Cor. 11. 31. Hereby may many temporal Judgements be prevented; However, that Eternal Judgement. As for Temporal Judgements, they may, and oft-times do befall those who have thus prejudged themselves. So was it with David; notwithstanding that he had judged himself for that sinne of his in numbring the People, acknowledging that he had therein sinned greatly, and done very foolishly; yet he hath a three-siringed whip held forth to him, a three-fold judgement offered to him to take his choice of, *Famine, Sword, or Pestilence*, one of which he must feel of. Yet by this means we may come to escape that dreadful censure, the sentence of Eternal Condemnation, which shall be passed upon all those who never thus judged themselves at the last day. This *prejudicium* will prevent that *Judicium*. Thus fore-judging our selves, we may prevent the terrour of that last Judgement.

Mot. 2. Again, this is the way to ease our selves
 To ease of the burden of sinne, by thus burdening
 the Soul our selves with it. *Allevat penitus errores,*
 of the burden *qui ipse se onerat* (saith *Ambrose*). He who
 of sinne; thus burdens himself, with charging his sins
 and to home upon himself; by so doing, he shall
 procure lighten the burden of sinne, that it will not
 the pardon of it. lie so heavy upon his Soul, as otherwise it
 would. To be thus *Heavy-laden*, is the way
 to *Rest*, Mat. 11. 28. This is the way, the
 next way to obtain Mercy at the hands of
 God. It was the way which *Benhadads*
 servants took to find mercy from the King
 of *Israel*, to come to him with *Ropes upon*
their heads, 1 King. 20. 31. So censuring
 and condemning themselves aforehand as
 Capital Offendors, having deserved death.
 No readier way to find Mercy at the hands
 of God, than for a man to be thus his
 own judge, and to be thus severe against
 himself. *In quantum non peperceris tibi, in*
tantum tibi Deus, crede, parcat. By how
 much lesse sparing thou art to thy self,
 (saith another of the Antients, *Tertullian*)
 by so much the more sparing (believe it)
 thou shalt find God to be unto thee. This
 is the next way to sue forth a Pardon.
 So *David* apprehended it, who maketh use
 of this as an *Argument* to move God to shew
 mercy to him, in the pardoning of his
 sinne, his acknowledging that he had sin-
 ned grearly, and done very foolishly. Now,

beseech thee O Lord (saith he), take away the Iniquitie of thy servant, for I have done very foolishly, 2 Sam. 24. 10. A strange Argument one would think to make use of, to such a purpose, to induce God to shew mercy to him, by aggravating his sinne in such a manner. Carnal reason would have thought it might have been a more likely way to have pleaded some excuse, and to have extenuated his sinne what he could. Not so, *David* apprehended this as the right way, and so he found it; not to go about to hide or extenuate, but to lay open, and to aggravate his sin to the height. In this the case is different betwixt *God* and *Man*. Before *men*, offenders are oft-times acquitted by the means of such Pleas, and excuses as they make use of. It is not so with *God*. With him, *he that covereth his sinne* (seeketh to conceal it, or to excuse it), *shall not prosper*, (as the *Wise man* telleth us), *Prov.* 28. 13. not prosper in his suit for mercy at the hands of *God*. Would we obtain mercy from him, do not deal deceitfully with him. But deal we impartially betwixt him and our own Souls, charging our selves home, in giving in our accounts to him. Not taking the like course that that unjust *Steward* in the Gospel put his Masters debtors upon, in giving in their accounts unto him, that for an *hundred*, one should set down *fifty*, another

eighty, (as we have it in the Parable) *Luke* 16. 6, 7. This we find there commended in him as a politick device, tending to his and their advantage; but so will it not be found in those that shall give in the like accounts to their God. Their diminishing will be an augmenting of their Debt. And therefore in this case deal we plainly, charging our selves to the utmost. This is the onely way to procure a gracious, and full discharge from God.

Directi-
ons.

Let these few *Motives* suffice. To which I might also (as before) sub-join some *Directions*, shewing you how Christians may attain unto this, to be such *severe censurers* of themselves. In order to which, the first work to be done, is, to get *acquaintance with our selves*; to know our own hearts and lives, to know our finnes, what they are; how many, how great. To which end a serious, and frequent, examination is requisite; taking special notice of our special finnes, as *Paul* here did of his. And, knowing them, to feel them; specially to feel that *Body of sinne* within us, that mass of corruption, which virtually contains in it the Seeds of all finnes. By this means we shall come to see that in our selves, which will make us ready to pass such a severe censure upon our selves, as *Paul* here doth, That we are sinners, great sinners, even the *chief of Sinners*. But I shall not

not proceed any further in the prosecution of this useful *Observation*, which hath taken me up a great deal more time than I intended to have bestowed upon it, when I first took it up.

There is yet one thing behind, wherein I shall be Brief. I have hitherto looked upon these words of the Apostle, as simply considered in themselves. It yet remains, that I should look upon them in a *relative* way. This I gave a touch upon, and but

These words looked upon in reference to the former.

a touch, in my entering upon them. Let me now do it a little more fully, looking upon them, as relating to what went before, to the words immediately foregoing; *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*: That is, One, and a chief one, of those sinners whom he came to save.

Thus doth he bring home that *general Doctrine*, (as before I shewed you) making it his own by a *particular Application*. There-

in teaching Christians what they are to do; not to rest contented with a general, and Speculative knowledge of the Doctrine of the Gospel, the Doctrine of Salvation by Jesus Christ, to know and believe, that Christ came into the world to save sinners; but thus to bring it home to themselves, making it their own by a particular Application. This are they to do, (as you have heard before) by all such Truths as they meet withal in the Book of God;

Obser.
The Doctrine of Salvation by Christ, to be particularly applied.

Pre-

*Precepts, Prohibitions, Exhortations, Commi-
 nations, Consolations*; that they may be use-
 full unto them, they are in such a way, to
 bring them home to themselves. And this
 they are to do in speciall by this saving
Truth, upon the right knowledg whereof,
 depends their everlasting Salvation; *This
 is life eternal, that they may know thee, the
 onely true God, and him whom thou hast sent,
 Jesus Christ*, John 17. 3. That it may be
 saving to those that hear it, it must be
 brought home by such a particular *Applica-
 tion*. Such an Application doth this our
 Apostle make of it, as here in the Text, so
 elsewhere; as *Gal. 2. 20. The life which I
 now live in the flesh, I live (saith he) by the
 faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and
 gave himself for me. Not onely who gave
 himself for us, (as elsewhere he speaketh),
 Tit. 2. 14. and Rom. 4. 25. Who was deli-
 vered for our Offences, and rose again for our
 Justification*; that is, for us *men* in Gene-
 ral, us *believers* in Special, but for *me* in
 Particular. Thus doth he apply the bene-
 fit of Christs death and passion to himself in
 particular; and the like are all true peni-
 tent sinners to do

Resp. r. This is *true Faith*, that faith whereby a
 sinner cometh to be justified before God.
*Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified
 by faith, (saith the Apostle), Rom. 3. 28.*
 And what faith is this? Why, faith in
 Jesus

This is
 true jus-
 tifying
 faith.

Jesus Christ, *The faith of the Son of God*, (as he calls it, *Gal. 2. 20.*) believing in him, on him. Such a faith it is that Christ calleth for at the hands of his Disciples, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*, *Joh. 14. 1.* 'Eis iui, *Believe on me*. And such a faith it is that God commandeth at the hands of all. *This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*, *1 Joh. 3. 23.* which is done by applying his merits to our selves.

And again, as a Christian is hereby justified, so it is hereby that he liveth. That he liveth here upon earth. *The just shall live by his faith* (saith *Habukkuk*, cap. 2. vers. 4.) His faith in God's word and promises. This is the *Anchor* which he rides by in all storms and stresses which here come down upon him, his Faith resting upon the promises of God; specially upon this great promise, the promise of Life and Salvation by Christ. So *Paul* lived, as he there telleth us, *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God*. Whilest he lived in this frail mortal body, (for so are we to understand that his *living in the flesh*, not his living after a carnal and fleshly manner, but his living a natural life here upon earth) this life he now lived, *by the faith of the Son of God*, resting and relying upon him, in all estates and conditions, committing himself unto

2.
Hereby a
Christian
liveth
upon
earth.

unto him, and by his Faith, drawing Vertue from him, whereby he was inabled to live unto him, to live a *spiritual life* whilest he was yet in the flesh.

3.
Hereby
he shall
live here
after.

And as a Christian liveth by this faith here, so it is by this faith that he shall live *hereafter*. Understand it rightly. Not that he shall so live by it in Heaven, as here he doth upon Earth. No, here we live by *faith*, there by *sight*, (as the Apostle tells us, 2 Cor. 5. 7.) seeing and enjoying what now by faith we hope for. But this is the onely way and means to bring us unto Eternal life, thus to believe in, and on, Jesus Christ. God so loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, (or on him, *in auctoritate*) should not perish, but have everlasting life, Joh. 3. 16. This is the true and onely saving faith, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, (saith Paul to the Jailour) Act. 16. 31. But I shall not enlarge upon it. Briefly, by way of *Application*.

Use 1.
The Do-
ctrine
of the
Church
of Rome
confuted

Where I might take occasion to cast a stone at the dangerous Errour of the Church of Rome; which maketh *faith* to be onely a general assent to the truth of what is revealed in the Scripture, and held forth by the Church. And so for *justifying saving faith*, they look upon it as no more but a believing of the doctrine of the Gospel concerning Jesus

Jesus Christ, as that he was the Son of God, made man, and that he came into the world to save sinners, &c. In the mean time, as for such a *particular Application*; this they make to be the work not of *Faith*, but of *Hope*. But them I shall pass by, only charging that upon them, which our Apostle did upon some *Hereticks* in his time, who denied the Resurrection of the Dead, *2 Tim.* 2. 18. That, concerning the Truth they have erred, and have overthrown the faith of some, of such as hearken to them, whom they teach to trust in a broken Reed.

Which let not us do, Let not us rest in such a general faith, but as we desire to receive any benefit from Christ, bring we him home by such a *particular Application* of his Merits to our selves.

Q. But how shall we be able to do this? when as Christ did not intend, that the Merit of his Death should be effectual to all, how shall we know that we are in the number of those whom he came into the world to Save? As for *Paul*, he might know this, having a speciall Revelation for it, but how shall we come to know it, to be assured of it?

A. For Answer briefly; Are we in measure such as *Paul* was? Truly *Penitent sinners*, such as have been thoroughly convinced of our sinnes, such as have judged and condemned our selves for them, such

Use 2.

Christians to bring home Christ, with his Merits to themselves.

Q.

How Christians may know that Christ came to save them

A. By being truly Penitent sinners.

as see and feel the need we have of a Saviour, and such as are willing to receive Christ upon *Gospel-terms*; to take him not only as a *Saviour*, but also as a *Sovereign*, being as willing, and desirous to be ruled and governed, as to be saved by him? Is it so, that God hath thus *revealed his Son to us*, and in us, as *Paul* saith he had done to him, *Gal. 1. 16*? If so, now *stand not to confer with flesh and blood*, (as he there saith he did not). Neither *be we disobedient to this Heavenly Vision*, as he tells King *Agrippa* he was not, *Act. 26. 19.*) But hearken we to the command of God, (*the Commandment*, as *St. John* there calleth it, *1 John 3. 23. This is the Commandment*, ἡ ἐντολή, that great Gospel-Command) which is, *That we should beleeve on the Name of his Son* In obedience to this Command now come we unto *Jesus Christ*, and lay hold upon him, beleeving on him for Life and Salvation, being confidently assured, that, He came into the world to Save us.

Let not
such De-
spair of
Mercy,
though
the chief
of Sin-
ners.

And being assured hereof, now despair not of obtaining this Benefit by and through Him. It matters not what our *sinnes* have been; what for *Number*, what for *Nature*; though never so many, never so great; though we have been the *chief of Sinners*, yet Despair not. Such a one had *Paul* been, yet Repenting, and Beleeving on *Jesus Christ*, he *obtained Mercy*: Which he did, (as he saith in the words after the Text)

That

That in him Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering for a Patern to them, that should hereafter beleve on him to everlasting Life. And so let him herein be to every of us. Only see that we be changed, as he was; changed not only in our Name (as he was from *Saul* to *Paul*) in our outward Profession, but inwardly changed; changed in our hearts and Lives, that we may be able to say, and make good, what he there doth, *Gal. 2. 20.* that we now live, yet no longer we; not what sometimes we were, but made new Creatures, finding Christ dwelling in our Hearts by Faith, and working in us by his Spirit, conforming us unto Himself in his Death and Resurrection; so as we daily die to Sinne, and rise to newness of Life. Being such now, what ever we have been, yet comfort we our selves with the Remembrance of these words of the Apostle; every of us saying after him, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.* And thus shall I now dismiss You and the Text; in the Handling whereof, I have, by a Divine Providence, found the *Leaves multiplied*, my Meditations much enlarged, beyond expectation. My desire now is, and shall be, that they may be sanctified and blessed unto my Self, and You, for those Ends for which they were intended. For which let us Pray.



READER,

There is lately Printed, an Exposition on the Parable of the *Rich Fool*, Luk. 12. 16, 22. By Mr. *Nehemiah Rogers*. The same Author that formerly hath written upon the Parable of the *Lost-Son*, *Lost-Sheep*, and *Lost-Goat*, Luk. 15. Also, upon the Parable of the *Creditor and Debtor*, Luk. 7. And on the Parable of the *Samaritane*, Luk. 10. And, on the Parable of the *Friend at Mid-Night*, Luk. 11. And, on the Parable of the *Figg-Tree*, Luk. 13.

All which are to be sold by *George Sawbridge*, at the *Bible* on *Ludgate-Hill*, 1662.

ERRATA.

Page 43. line 12. for *It is*, read *Is it*. p. 45. l. 32. for *the work he came which about*, r. *the work which he came about*.

